

## MILITARY

Sexual assault reports often followed by retaliation for victims

Page 4

## GIFT GUIDE

Holiday roundup highlights the cream of the crap

Page 16



## VIDEO GAMES

Mountain adventure 'Far Cry 4' seizes gaming high ground

Page 15

**NFL: Cowboys look to Philly after nabbing 9th win against Bears » Back page**

# STARS AND STRIPES.®

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Free to Deployed Areas

## AFGHANISTAN

# New plan calls for extra US troops

From staff and wire reports

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration plans to keep hundreds of extra troops in Afghanistan on a temporary basis next year, above the force of 9,800 that President Barack Obama had previously announced for 2015, in another sign of the challenges the United States faces as it extricates itself from a 13-year war.

A military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Stars and Stripes that the extra force will "largely" consist of troops already

Analysts say eagerness to avoid Iraq-style chaos spurs reassessment

Page 7

in Afghanistan whose deployments will be extended until early spring.

However, service members not already there might be deployed "in ones and

twos" to be part of the additional force, the official said. The official did not identify units or individuals that would stay longer than planned.

A senior defense official told Stars and Stripes that no final decisions have been made about a possible bridging force, and Army Gen. John Campbell — the commander of international forces in Afghanistan — is still working through the details about the force.

U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss military planning, said the Obama administration was continuing its discussions with allied nations about how many troops NATO countries would be able to contribute to a training mission in Afghanistan, set to begin Jan. 1 when the alliance's long combat mission ends.

SEE EXTRA ON PAGE 7



## CARTER PLEDGES CANDIDNESS

Obama makes official nomination of defense secretary

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Ashton Carter on Friday pledged to deliver candid military advice to the White House as it ended days of anticipation and officially nominated him as the next defense secretary.

It was the first indication from Carter, who must now be confirmed by the Senate, that he might take a stronger leadership role at the Pentagon than outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, who was pushed out after what many considered a mediocre two-year tenure.

If confirmed, Carter will be entering a difficult political situation in Washington and face a raft of military issues abroad. President Barack Obama outlined his expectations for a new defense secretary during the announcement, saying Carter would focus on fighting the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, and cutting defense spending.

"If confirmed in this job, I pledge to you my most candid strategic advice and I pledge also that you will receive equally candid military advice," Carter said.

**SEE CANDID ON PAGE 5**

### INSIDE

Carter may be hobbled by bungled selection process

Page 5

President Barack Obama named Ashton Carter as his nominee for secretary of defense during a news conference at the White House on Friday.

JOE GROMELSKI  
Stars and Stripes

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

"What's the message to ISIS? 'Hey, guys, all we're going to do is bomb you, no matter what happens?' That's crazy."

— Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., at a meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in discussing restrictions, such as a prohibition against the use of combat troops, as part of new legal authority for the war against the Islamic State group

See story on Page 11

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The most popular stories on our website:

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5. Air Force identifies airman missing in Guam

## COMING SOON

Science & Medicine

Return of the "satellite killer?"



## TODAY IN STRIPES

American Roundup .....	14
Business .....	21
Comics .....	23
Crossword .....	23
Health & Fitness .....	19
Lifestyle .....	15, 17
Opinion .....	12-13
Sports .....	24-32
Video Games .....	15
Weather .....	21

## WAR/MILITARY



PHOTOS BY HENDRICK SIMOES/Stars and Stripes

Monica Ndaw and her daughter Eva Ndaw build a gingerbread house at a Family Readiness Group-sponsored holiday event at Naval Support Activity Bahrain on Friday.

### Families in Bahrain ensure sweet holidays

From staff reports

MANAMA, Bahrain — Servicemembers and families at Naval Support Activity Bahrain got into the holiday spirit this past week. On Thursday not only did the base light its holiday tree, but Santa Claus and his helpers made a special appearance to visit with the children of the 8,200 U.S. personnel living in Bahrain. On Friday, the holiday cheer continued at a base Family Readiness Group-sponsored gingerbread house-building event.



About 60 families showed up to build gingerbread houses at a Family Readiness Group-sponsored holiday event. The Hanthorn family built the gingerbread house at left.

### Soldier accused of smuggling cash

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — FBI agents on Thursday arrested a Puerto Rican U.S. Army reservist accused of smuggling more than \$113,000 in cash from Afghanistan and stealing military equipment.

Staff Sgt. Luis Ramon Casellas also was indicted on charges that also include wrongfully obtaining nearly \$97,000 in federal overseas housing payments when officials said he had not been paying rent in Puerto Rico.

Authorities said Casellas was deployed to Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan in April 2013. He led a team ordered to help break down small U.S. bases ahead of troop withdrawals, a job that officials said included collecting government property for future use and selling the remainder for scrap to Afghan contractors.

Casellas is accused of taking some \$6,300 worth of equipment, including laptops and radios, and sending it to Puerto Rico. He also is accused of mailing the cash to Puerto Rico without declaring it.

### Soldier from Indiana dies in Afghanistan

NOBLESVILLE, Ind. — Military officials say a soldier from central Indiana was fatally wounded during combat in Afghanistan.

The Department of Defense says Staff Sgt. Matthew Ammerman, 29, of Noblesville died Wednesday.

The military said he was wounded by small-arms fire in Zabul province.

Ammerman was assigned to the Army's 7th Special Forces Group that's based at Florida's Eglin Air Force Base.

From The Associated Press

### Correction

In a Dec. 5 story about a U.S.-Iraqi deal of immunity for U.S. troops, The Associated Press erroneously reported that U.S. Ambassador Stuart Jones specified that current Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi gave the assurances of immunity. He said it was the Iraqi government, and the U.S. Embassy has since clarified that the agreement was reached in June, when Nouri al-Maliki was prime minister.

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## WAR/MILITARY

### No-nonsense Ghani aims to steady nation

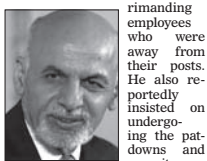
BY ALI M. LATIFI  
AND SHASHANK BENGALI  
*Los Angeles Times*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's trip to China in October was notable not only for being his first state visit but also for what his delegation brought back to Kabul: unspent money.

Officials in the presidential palace were caught off-guard when a member of the delegation returned most of the several thousand dollars he was given for the journey. They described it as a stark change in attitude from former President Hamid Karzai's tenure, when senior officials routinely requested — and were granted — large spending allowances to travel abroad, often for routine medical treatment.

During his two months in office, Ghani has established an all-business tone, eschewing ostentation and even instilling fear as he seeks to stabilize Afghanistan.

Ghani has made unannounced nighttime inspections at prisons and hospitals, in some cases reprimanding employees



Ghani

who were away from their posts. He also reportedly insisted on undergoing the pat-downs and security checks that

travelers endure at Kabul's international airport.

In a country where the powerful often enjoy impunity, the moves have won Ghani — who took office after a bitter, drawn-out election marred by fraud allegations — the support of a weary public. One recent poll said 84 percent of Afghans were satisfied with his leadership, at surprisingly high figure given initial skepticism of the national unity government he formed as a compromise with rival Abdullah Abdullah.

"I think he's doing a pretty good job in getting started," said Ahmad Shuja, co-founder of Impasson Afghanistan, an Afghan digital media company. "There's a sense he remembers the promises he made during the campaign."

Ghani's blunt, forceful style has also earned detractors. He referred to Taliban insurgents as "political opposition," which aides said was part of an effort to jump-start moribund peace talks.

Comments — which recalled Karzai's references to the Taliban as "brothers" — struck many Afghans and Westerners as tone-deaf, particularly after recent suicide bombings in Kabul that killed civilians and injured a prominent lawmaker and women's rights advocate, Shukria Barakzai.



DAN KITWOOD/AP

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, left, shakes hands with Afghan Chief Executive Officer Abdullah during a conference on Afghanistan Thursday in London.

## Afghan allegiance assured

### US, Britain reaffirm commitment after troops withdraw

BY CAROL MORELLO  
*The Washington Post*

LONDON — The United States and Britain vowed Thursday that they will not abandon Afghanistan even after international combat troops are withdrawn at the end of the month, closing a chapter of a military engagement that began in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and British Prime Minister David Cameron, appearing at a conference of nations whose donations help keep Afghanistan financially afloat, said it was in their national interests to continue supporting the struggling country as it enters what they called a "transformation decade."

"We are committed to ensuring that Afghanistan can never again be used as a safe haven from which terrorists can threaten the international community," Kerry said. "We know that the most effective way to advance this objective is to support Afghanistan's

political unity and its security."

Kerry praised the new unity government of President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah, two former rivals who attended the conference determined to keep the aid flowing to their otherwise broke country.

"We have a government in Kabul that merits our confidence," Kerry said. "They can be confident of the support of the international community."

The conference was billed as a time for Afghanistan and its benefactors to "take stock" of each other during a critical juncture in the history of the nation, wedged between its first democratic transfer of power and the impending pullout of international combat troops. Afghanistan also has been facing a recent surge in Taliban attacks, and many are concerned about what will happen when the withdrawal concludes by Dec. 31.

Donor nations had earlier promised to give \$16 billion to

Afghanistan between 2012 and 2015 — the United States pledging almost half of it — and more aid was not on the table, at least for now.

"We do need support, and they reiterated their commitments," Abdullah said as he walked into a meeting with Kerry.

Kerry said the conference was a chance for "everyone to get a sense of the vision of the government, which could then encourage people to come to the next donor conference."

Pointedly, the first number Ghani cited Thursday in remarks at the end of the conference did not concern money. Rather, the Afghan leader paid tribute to the 3,400 men and women from NATO countries such as the United States and Britain who have died in Afghanistan in the past 13 years.

Ghani said they did not perish in vain, and he promised that his government would be different from the previous corruption-riddled one.

## Afghan, Pakistan relations imperiled

BY ELTAF NAJAFIZADA  
AND KAMRAN HAIDER  
*Bloomberg News*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan expressed "grave concerns" about trenches being dug by Pakistan along a disputed border, threatening President Ashraf Ghani's efforts to overcome mis-

**'The trenches near the Durand Line will never be acceptable.'**

Ahmad Shekib  
Afghan Foreign  
Ministry spokesman

trust between the terrorism-hit nations. "The trenches near the Durand Line will never be acceptable, and whatever they do there is a clear interference on Afghan soil," Afghan Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmad Shekib Mustaghni said by phone Thursday in Kabul. The resumption of construction may erode "trust and credibility," he said.

While Pakistan says the trenches will keep out militants and prevent illegal crossings, Afghanistan holds that they'll be ineffective as its neighbor's military must first remove visible terrorist safe havens. The spat threatens to stall security cooperation and worsen a relationship described as "poor" by the U.S. Department of Defense.

"On a strategic level, we have very common interests; we are joined at the hips," Mahmud Durani, a Pakistani former national security adviser and ex-ambassador to the United States, said by phone. Digging the trenches is a tactical move against militants, "but years and years of mistrust and hostility can't go away overnight," he said.

Ghani and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif were both attending a conference in London Thursday at which the Afghan government was presenting its plans for the period after the withdrawal of most U.S. troops in the coming weeks.

The trenches are on Pakistan's side of the border, Pakistan foreign Ministry spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam said by phone Thursday in Islamabad. She said she wasn't aware of any concerns expressed by the government in Kabul.

Ghani last month pledged to jointly fight terrorism with Pakistan as U.S. forces exit the region, and Sharif said the nations' security and prosperity are linked.

The Durand Line is a 1,640-mile border between Afghanistan and what is now Pakistan imposed by British colonial rulers in the 19th century that Afghanistan doesn't recognize.



## MILITARY

# Retaliation still major issue in military

## Study: Efforts to make sex assault victims feel safe still fall short

By JENNIFER HLAG

Stars and Stripes

Despite significant efforts to make military victims of sexual assault feel safe in reporting attacks, a new survey indicates that retaliation remains a major issue.

"When someone reports a sexual assault, they need to be embraced and helped, not ostracized or punished with retribution," Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said Thursday while discussing a Rand Corp. report based on a massive anonymous survey of servicemembers, a review of the military justice system and a survey of about 150 sexual assault victims.

He announced several reforms, including new training and an additional study designed in part to prevent retaliation.

Survey results suggested that the number of sexual assaults in the military has gone down, while the percentage of victims who reported attacks has gone up. Therefore, the Pentagon believes "survivors are becoming more confident in the military's response to sexual assault," Hagel said, but retaliation must be reduced.

Retaliating against servicemembers who have reported a crime — even just threatening adverse actions — was made illegal under the Uniform Code of Military Justice this year by Congress and the military.

Still, 62 percent of women who said they had reported a sexual assault in the military also said they had experienced some form of retaliation — social, profession-

al or both. That was unchanged from the last survey, in 2012.

At a news briefing Thursday, Rear Adm. Rick Snyder, the Navy's sexual assault prevention and response officer, said anything which could discourage reporting of sexual assaults or recovery of victims "is really counterproductive to, frankly, everything we're trying to do here."

Air Force Maj. Gen. Gina Gross seemed to downplay concerns of retaliation, saying it seems more like a "peer to peer" problem or issue with how friends and co-workers treat victims than what people might envision: getting fired or moved to a bad job.

"We do know that some victims feel ostracized," said Gross, director of the Air Force's sexual assault prevention and response efforts. "And some of it may be because the airmen feel like they have to choose sides in a unit, which of course we wouldn't want to happen. But I think actually some of it is also people thinking, 'I want to help you, but I don't know how to approach you.'"

Servicemembers reported that they perceived the climate of their commands to be favorable for sexual assault prevention and response. Still, women rated their command climates slightly lower than men, and junior enlisted and noncommissioned officers perceived their command climate as slightly less favorable than servicemembers of other ranks.

The vast majority of the victims in sexual assault cases that are reported and investigated are women, junior enlisted troops and noncommissioned officers.

"Commanders receive fairly

high marks in their support of victims," those high marks do not extend to all as you move down the chain of command," said Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Snow, director of the DOD's sexual



**"The data shows a persistent hostile culture for survivors remains the rule, not the exception."**

Rep. Jackie Speier  
Marine Corps, D-Calif.

are particularly worried about social retaliation, said Col. Scott Jensen, head of the Corps' sexual assault prevention and response branch. Leaders had already identified and begun to address the issue of retaliation, as well as the impact of cyberbullying and intimidation via social media, before the survey results were released, he said.

sexual assault prevention and response office. So while commanders appear to be doing well in their support of victims, "others in the command and supervisory chain may not have the skills and knowledge to do the same."

Anu Bhagwati, executive director of the advocacy group Service Women's Action Network, said in an interview with Stars and Stripes that while reporting of sexual assault seems to have increased, the crime is still very much underreported.

That fact, coupled with the high number of victims who said they experienced retaliation, says a lot about safety and command climate, Bhagwati said.

Retaliation is "deeply ingrained in the culture of the military," she said, and the only way to change that is by reforming the military justice process.

"Clearly, victims don't feel safe," Bhagwati said. "This is a straightforward fix that military leaders don't have the courage to implement."

The Pentagon in the past year has implemented several major reforms to its justice system and the way it handles sexual assaults, but the proposal SWAN supports — which would remove prosecutorial authority on serious crimes from a victim or accused attacker's commander — has so far failed to pass the Senate.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., the champion of that bill, said the survey results on retaliation should be a "screaming red flag."

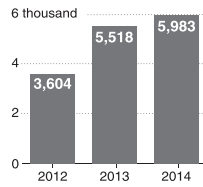
Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., said the survey should be a wake-up call.

"The data shows a persistent hostile culture for survivors remains the rule, not the exception," she said.

Still, at a news conference Thursday — and in the report itself — military leaders and sup-

## Military sex assaults

Victims who reported sexual assaults to the Defense Department in the past three fiscal years:



SOURCE: Defense Department AP

porters of the reforms that passed in the last year said the increase in reporting of sexual assaults and an estimated decrease in the occurrence of sexual assaults is proof that reforms worked.

Hagel told a story about his visit to the offices of the Pentagon's Safe Helpline, a confidential hotline for military victims of sexual assault. There, he said, a wall is plastered with notes from victims who have gotten help and support from the service.

So while the data shows "indications of real progress," he said, "We ultimately want a military with no more victims, no more calls, no more Post-it notes, no more needed help and no more efforts to stop [sexual assault], because it will be stopped. We're not there yet, but we will get there."

Chris Carroll and Jon Harper contributed to this report.  
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## Probe: Lone Afghan shooter killed US Army general at close range

By DAN LAMOTHE

The Washington Post

The mass shooting that killed a two-star Army general and wounded 18 people in Afghanistan on Aug. 5 was carried out by a lone Afghan soldier who had no apparent ties to the Taliban and who seized "a target of opportunity," according to a U.S. military investigation.

The investigation, released Thursday by the U.S. Central Command, found that Maj. Gen. Harold Greene, of Falls Church,

Va., died immediately after being shot multiple times in the pelvis, head and neck by an army private named Rafiqullah, 22, who also was killed in the incident. The report found that Rafiqullah opened fire from a bathroom window in a military police barracks less than 50 feet away from the nearest person he targeted. He had previously expressed disdain for Americans.

Greene was the highest-ranking U.S. officer killed in a combat zone since the Vietnam War. The others wounded in the shooting

included German Army Brig. Gen. Michael Bartscher and Afghan Brig. Gen. Miyan-Yar Gulaim Sahki. Names of others who were wounded are redacted from the newly released documents, but they include 10 Americans, three Afghans and two individuals from Britain.

The attack occurred at the Marshal Fahim National Defense University. The facility, in the Gariga district of Kabul province and west of the city, was known as the Afghan National Defense University until this year. Greene,

the deputy commanding general of Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, and the others were at the university to discuss an ongoing construction project and highlight the school's potential for training Afghan army officers.

The report said Rafiqullah was not believed to have been a member of the Taliban or other extremist group. He may have been "self-radicalized" or had a mental illness, investigators said. He fired 27 to 30 rounds from an

M-16 that carried up to 30 rounds in its magazine, and was killed by coalition servicemembers.

It "appears the shooting was not premeditated, and the shooter simply took advantage of a target of opportunity provided by the close gathering," according to the investigation report, completed by Army Brig. Gen. Donald Jackson Jr.

An Afghan interpreter for a contractor at the academy told investigators that Rafiqullah had expressed dislike for Americans before.

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## MILITARY

## Candid: Obama calls nominee 'reformer' who knows DOD 'inside and out'

## FROM FRONT PAGE

He is trained as a theoretical physicist and has served in the Pentagon's No. 2 position, has been its chief weapons buyer and has served in some form under 11 previous defense secretaries. But Carter has no experience in Congress nor in the uniformed military, meaning he would bring a different skill set than the outgoing secretary, a former senator and Vietnam veteran.

Obama presented Carter as an old hand at the Pentagon and a friend to troops who championed sending more armored vehicles and body armor downrange.

"He is a reformer who has never been afraid to cancel old or inefficient weapons programs," Obama said. "He knows the Department of Defense inside and out."

The administration pushed

Hagel out last month as it searches for a strategic footing. Hagel was widely seen as an administration yes-man often overshadowed by military brass, yet a steadfast public loyalty was not enough to maintain the president's support.

Carter faces working with a White House that has been accused by prior defense secretaries of micromanaging defense issues while also searching for strong advice to deal with complex conflicts abroad.

Obama said he would expect Carter to handle the war effort in Iraq and Syria as a top priority.

The administration has called the Islamic State a major threat to the region and the United States, and the military has been bombing targets in both countries since August in a war it says will last years. Success of the complicated

effort, which involves dozens of allies and various fronts, is still uncertain.

Carter would inherit a controversial plan to fight the extremists through a proxy ground force comprising rebels fighting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. After expressing skepticism this fall, Congress is now poised next week to approve the program to train and equip vetted rebels, and push billions of dollars more into the Pentagon's overseas war account.

Hagel struggled with the Obama war strategy and Carter will certainly face a challenge as the new face of the effort. Critics of the train-and-equip plan have pointed to various pitfalls such as a difficulty in getting the rebels to turn from Assad to fight Islamist extremists and the possibility of weapons falling into the hands of

the Islamic State.

Obama also said Carter would also be shepherding a drawdown of Afghanistan operations — now our longest war.

That country's fragile new government is threatened by internal power struggles and Taliban attacks are surging. In January, a two-year advisory and counterterrorism operation called Operation Resolute Support will replace the war, requiring about 9,800 troops to remain there, though that number too could change.

Carter would be expected to give key input to the administration as it tweaks plans in an effort to avoid the turmoil occurring in Iraq after the U.S. withdrawal in 2011.

Outside of war strategy, successful defense secretaries often find a connection with rank-and-

file troops. The president gave a nod to that Friday by mentioning Carter's support of new protections against improvised explosive devices for those fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But Obama also said the military will be "necessarily leaner" in coming years and he expects Carter to make tough spending decisions. That will almost certainly mean unpopular cuts to troop benefits.

Congress is now considering a 2015 defense budget that reduces pay raises, housing allowances, health care coverage, and commissary funding. Lawmakers have warned will mean deeper cuts to benefits or a reduction in the military's ability to fight wars.

Written by Travis Stripes  
Twitter: @Travis\_Tritter

## Bungled selection process could hobble new defense chief

BY NANCY A. YOUSSEF  
AND ANITA KUMAR

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The transition of power at the Pentagon under President Barack Obama has not made anyone look good.

News reports early this week said Ashton Carter, a former deputy defense secretary, would be the next secretary of defense. But the White House had not completed its vetting process before his name was floated Tuesday after at least three potential candidates publicly announced they did not want the job.

That makes Carter look like the last choice. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., described Carter this week as "the last man standing."

The resignation of his predecessor, Chuck Hagel, nearly two weeks ago reportedly came after more than a month of conversations amid White House unhappiness with his performance. Yet the administration didn't have a candidate lined up to replace him in one of the administration's top jobs, as the Carter news stories make clear.

Now there's fear that the poorly handled transition portends two more years of a weakened defense chief as the Pentagon confronts a nuanced, messy war in Iraq and Syria, Russian aggression, Middle East violence and continuing budget cuts.

"I think it is unfair to the individuals and it makes it more difficult for them to be an



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

President Barack Obama and Ashton Carter share a laugh after Obama nominated Carter to be the next secretary of defense Friday at the White House.

effective secretary," said Lawrence Korb, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, a liberal group with close ties to the Obama administration. "Hagel is going to be in office for at least another month. And Carter will not come in with the gravitas other people have had, given that he is the default choice."

The White House declined to comment on its handling of the

changes at the Pentagon.

Presidents frequently face the departure of Cabinet secretaries under tense circumstances. But most of the time they have replacements lined up.

In April, when Kathleen Sebelius said she would resign as secretary of health and human services after a stormy tenure, Obama announced her replacement, Sylvia Mathews Burwell,

the next day.

"Clearly it's been handled very poorly," said Eric Edelman, a former undersecretary of defense and ambassador who now serves as a distinguished fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a national security research institute. "They should have someone teed up. It all contributes to a perception and sense of disarray. ... It's not

like secretaries of defense haven't been fired and changed."

Lyndon Johnson, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush all replaced their defense secretaries promptly, Edelman said.

Delay isn't a new strategy for Obama.

Last month, he scrambled to name his nominee for attorney general after news leaked that Loretta Lynch, the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York, would get the job. The announcement, six weeks after Attorney General Eric Holder revealed that he would leave, ended up being on a Saturday after Earnest admitted that extensive news reports "pushed this issue, a decision was sort of forced."

Charles Dunlap Jr., executive director of Duke University's Center on Law, Ethics and National Security, who retired from the Air Force in 2010 as a major general, said it's curious the White House didn't arrange for a smoother transition. But Dunlap said Carter has such a good reputation in the Pentagon, on Capitol Hill and elsewhere that he should be able to lead effectively.

"It is a little troubling the process seemed to be so poorly planned," he said. "But Carter is a good fit. I think the administration is going to land on its feet."

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Sabrina Blain  
c/o Blain Law Firm, P.C.,  
301 McCullough Drive, 4th Floor  
Charlotte, NC 28262

## Personnel chief resigns

Stars and Stripes

Jessica Wright, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, has tendered her resignation effective March 31, the Defense Department said in a news release.

Her resignation, which comes just days after Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced

his retirement, is the finale to a career that has spanned 40 years of government service. She has served as Hagel's undersecretary since January 1, 2013.

Wright, a former major general and commander of the Pennsylvania National Guard, said she will follow Hagel into retirement in order to spend more time with her family.

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## MILITARY

# Senator: Probe of bin Laden raid leak botched

By JONATHAN S. LANDAY  
and MARISA TAYLOR

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Two top officials in the Pentagon Inspector General's Office bungled an investigation into allegations that former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and other defense officials leaked classified information to Hollywood filmmakers, a senior Republican senator is charging.

The investigation produced "a second-class report that wasn't worth the paper on which it was written," Sen. Chuck Grassley of

Iowa asserted in a scathing Nov. 17 letter to John Rymer, the Defense Department's inspector general. "The ... project was an unmitigated disaster spawned by a series of top-level missteps and blunders."

In the end, Grassley noted, no one has been held responsible more than two years after the leaks to the makers of "Zero Dark Thirty," a blockbuster film depicting the May 2, 2011, Navy SEALs raid on Osama bin Laden's hideout in Pakistan.

The Pentagon investigation "was wasteful of taxpayers' money and

harmful to the perceived independence of the IG's office," Grassley wrote in his letter, a copy of which was obtained by McClatchy.

The handling of the case highlighted an apparent double standard in the way the Obama administration has dealt with leaks. While no one has been held responsible for the "Zero Dark Thirty" disclosures, the administration has aggressively pursued lower-level leakers and journalists.

Grassley's charges were based on an inquiry by his staff into the leak investigation that was

overseen by Lynne Halbrooks, the principal deputy Pentagon inspector general who was serving as acting inspector general at the time, and James Ives, a deputy Pentagon inspector general.

The staff cited possible misconduct by the pair that included discussions that Halbrooks held with Panetta and his aides about the investigation while it was still underway. Moreover, the public release of the final report was held up until after Panetta resigned on Feb. 27, 2013.

The delay created "the perception that the report process was

slowed by PDIG Halbrooks and others working at her direction to shield DOD officials from scrutiny and perhaps to bolster" a bid by Halbrooks to permanently win the post in which she was temporarily serving, said the staff's findings.

Halbrooks' discussions with Panetta and his former chief of staff, Jeremy Bash, about the investigation of which they were both targets, "continues to be a source of concern and deserves further review," said the findings, which were appended to the letter to Rymer.

## Fort Hood shooting victims finally could get Purple Hearts

By JEREMY SCHWARTZ  
Austin American-Statesman

AUSTIN, Texas — More than five years after the mass shooting at Fort Hood that left 13 dead and more than 30 wounded, the victims finally appear poised to become eligible for Purple Hearts that would give them and their family members enhanced medical, retirement and hiring benefits.

The National Defense Authorization Act, which provides 2015 defense funding and passed the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday afternoon, contains a measure that would open the door to Purple Hearts for servicemembers wounded or killed in attacks deemed to have connections to foreign terrorist organizations.

The Pentagon has objected to awarding Purple Hearts to Fort Hood victims because they were wounded by an American soldier, and a series of previous bills failed to clear the Senate Armed Forces Committee.

This time though, Texas lawmakers are optimistic the measure will become law. The House passed the spending bill on a 300-119 vote and an aide to U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said

the measure is unlikely to be altered before the Senate votes next week.

The Pentagon had been loath to declare then-Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Hasan an enemy combatant, a prerequisite for a Purple Heart, before his court-martial and said issuing Purple Hearts to victims could derail his trial.

But during his 2013 court-martial, after which he was sentenced to death, Hasan declared he was acting in the service of the Taliban and jihadist forces.

During opening statements, he told jurors he found himself "on the wrong side" of a war against Islam and so he "switched sides." Hasan opened fire on unarmed soldiers getting medical checks before deploying to war.

Before the shootings, Hasan had corresponded with al-Qaida-linked cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who was later killed by an American drone strike in Yemen.

The new measure would make Purple Hearts available to those injured or killed by attackers who had been "in communication with the foreign terrorist organization before the attack" and whose actions were "inspired or motivated by the foreign terrorist organization."



STEVE HEASLIP, CAPE COD (MASS.) TIMES/AP

Crewmembers man the rails of the research vessel Knorr as it approaches the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute docks Wednesday in Woods Hole, Mass.

## After 1.3M miles, research ship retires

The Associated Press

WOODS HOLE, Mass. — A ship that sailed more than 1.3 million miles in the name of science is back at port for the last time.

The research vessel Knorr is being decommissioned after more than 40 years as the workhorse of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution research fleet. It docked for good Wednesday to fireworks and a cannon salute.

The Cape Cod Times reports

that the crew placed handmade farewell signs on the sides of the ship. One banner read: "1,360,630 miles for science." Another said simply: "So long, old girl."

The Knorr will be sold by the Navy, which owns it, and will be replaced next spring by a new, \$74 million research vessel, the Neil Armstrong.

"It's very sad," said Bob Pickart, a senior Woods Hole scientist who did four tours on the ship.

"I've done such great science in such challenging conditions on the Knorr. We're losing this first-class vessel."

Rob Munier, the oceanographic institute's vice president of marine operations, said most research ships are taken out of service after four decades.

Among the challenges Seasheep said the Knorr has weathered: 70-foot waves, hurricanes and arctic ice.

## Vets march on Capitol Hill to bring suicide prevention bill to floor

By BRIDGET BOWMAN  
CQ Roll Call

WASHINGTON — A group of veterans marched with American flags in hand to the Hart Senate Office Building Thursday to urge the Senate to act on a bill to prevent veteran suicides.

"Now we're looking at December, the session is almost over and we're trying to get this bill passed now before we have to start back at square one in January," Kristofer Goldsmith of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America told CQ Roll Call.

Goldsmith, 29, a Long Island native and Iraq War veteran, was among the group of veterans who rallied at the White House earlier on Thursday and then marched from Upper Senate Park to the office building. The American flags hoisted on their shoulders were visible from the Capitol.

The veterans were calling on Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., to bring the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, named for a veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars who committed

suicide in 2011, to the floor of the Senate. On Nov. 19, Hunt's mother testified in front of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and pointed to problems with mental health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"Despite (Clay's) proactive and open approach to seeking care to address his injuries, the VA system did not adequately address his needs," said Hunt. "Even today, we continue to hear about both individual and systemic failures by the VA to provide adequate care and address the needs

of veterans."

Last spring, revelations of waiting lists and inadequate health care at VA medical centers roiled the department, and resulted in the president appointing a new VA secretary and Congress passing reforms to the department. But the veterans on the Hill Thursday said Congress still needs to act on suicide prevention.

"We just want to make sure that they, too, understand that the cost of not doing this continues to be 22 veterans a day dying by suicide, in addition to more active-duty

troops tending to do the same," said Alex Nicholson, IAVA's legislative director. "We want to dare them to vote against a veteran suicide prevention bill and if so, then we'll hold them accountable."

The bill would institute a number of reforms, including an annual third-party review of VA and Department of Defense mental health and suicide prevention programs, a website detailing mental health care services, and a pilot program to repay education loans for those who study psychiatric medicine and serve veterans.



## WAR/MILITARY

## Extra: Plan fills gaps' left by other NATO nations

## FROM FRONT PAGE

The date is a milestone, as the United States and other Western nations seek to curtail their military involvement in Afghanistan without allowing the Afghan government to cede ground to the Taliban, which has intensified its attacks in the capital in recent weeks.

But because not all NATO nations are able to meet targets for contributing troops to the 12,000-strong training force by Jan. 1, the United States will keep a larger number of troops in Afghanistan, at least until the early spring, the officials said.

"There will be some gaps that will need to be filled," a military official told Stars and Stripes, but "we're not talking about a big deployment."

The official said the number of extra troops will be in the "hundreds."

"All this is keeping the lights turned on until partner nations can get their people (in place)," a U.S. official said.

After a lengthy internal debate, the White House unveiled a plan in May to reduce the U.S. force in Afghanistan to 9,800 servicemembers by Jan. 1, a step toward ending its military presence entirely by the time Obama leaves office in 2017. While most of those troops will take part in the NATO mission to support Afghanistan's military, others will be assigned to a separate counterterrorism mission focused on al-Qaida.

U.S. officials said the need for a "bridging solution" resulted from a long delay in finalizing security agreements required to keep foreign troops in Afghanistan after 2014. Officials described the decision as a stop-gap measure to ensure the NATO training mission can be launched as planned.

The evolving plans for the future U.S. military force in Afghanistan follow Obama's recent decision to expand authority for U.S. troops to protect Afghan soldiers and to respond to militant attacks beyond this year.

Both steps indicate the difficulty of restricting the U.S. military role in Afghanistan while the country's fragile national unity government remains dependent on the West for air support and other key military activities. Afghanistan also will require billions of dollars of outside aid to fund its own military for years to come.

Plans for the bridging solution were first reported in November, but officials at the Pentagon had declined to confirm those plans.

Stars and Stripes reporter Jon Harper and Washington Post staff writer Karen DeYoung contributed to this report.

## Afghanistan 2015: A mission in flux

Analysts say eagerness to avoid Iraq-style chaos spurs reassessment

By CHRIS CARROLL  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — With violence on the rise and the 13-year-old NATO operation ending this month, the U.S. military's mission in Afghanistan appears in flux as the Obama administration works to avoid an Iraq-style breakdown.

The White House already has made one important adjustment in recent weeks, broadening the list of possible U.S. targets during Operation Resolute Support, the planned two-year advisory-and-counterterrorism operation that begins in January.

And while administration officials insist there are no major changes in the works for planned troop levels and the timetable for U.S. withdrawal, analysts say that parameters may soon be adjusted as well. The Pentagon on Friday confirmed that a "bridging force" will be needed, adding perhaps a few hundred more troops until spring, when NATO partners can furnish their troops.

Two key factors have shifted since President Barack Obama in May publicly mapped out a plan for 9,800 U.S. troops and a few thousand more NATO coalition troops engaged in "two narrow missions after 2014: training Afghan forces and supporting counterterrorism operations against the remnants of al-Qaida."

One is the meltdown in Iraq, where Islamic State militants sent U.S.-trained Iraqi forces into full retreat this spring and summer, prompting a growing American advisory mission there. The second is the fear that the rise in casualties inflicted by the Taliban on both government forces and civilians is foretaste of Iraq-style chaos is prompting a reassessment in Afghanistan, analysts say.

Equally importantly, after a protracted presidential election dispute, Afghanistan has new leaders who have signaled their eagerness to work with the United States. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani is seen as a far more willing partner than his predecessor, Hamid Karzai. Ghani quickly ratified a key security agreement with the United States that Karzai had refused to sign.

As a result, the administration perceives a higher level of risk in Afghanistan, but greater latitude as well for U.S. action to counter it, said retired Lt. Gen. David New American Security, a Washington think tank with close ties to the Obama administration. "I

"I think the combination of those two things are going to change the dynamic significantly in Afghanistan the next two years," said Barno, who is now a senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, a Washington think tank with close ties to the Obama administration. "I



DANIEL LUKSAN/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

U.S. soldiers from the 454th Engineer Company decide what to do about an oncoming cow while on a patrol in September in Sayghani, Parwan province, Afghanistan. The purpose of the patrol was to gather intel on indirect fire attacks happening at Bagram Air Field.

think all bets are probably off now."

Iraq appears to have shown the Obama administration what can go wrong in a formerly occupied country left with insufficient U.S. support, said Frederick Kagan, resident scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, a Washington think tank.

One would like to think the White House noticed what happened in Iraq and decided it would be foolish to create conditions in a repetition of that likely," he said.

White House and Pentagon officials have argued that the recent order signed by Obama — which allows commanders to attack not just al-Qaida-affiliated terrorists, but insurgents gunning for the Afghan government — is not a change in policy nor a broadening of the war.

The authority would only be used to defend Afghan government forces, something military planners had been counting on all along, administration officials have said. Broad U.S. offensives against the Taliban are said to be off the table.

"If an ANSF position that has strategic significance was at risk of being overrun, that would be an example where we would use U.S. forces, if available," said a U.S. official who spoke to Stars and Stripes on the condition of anonymity.

Military planners expect that such support would primarily be in the form of close air support, the official said. Other "enabling" functions such as casualty evacuations also could be on the table. Whether U.S. infantry or other ground fighting forces would be employed in support of Afghans remains ambiguous, the official indicated.

But many observers, including Barno, don't accept the argument

that U.S. airstrikes or other operations on behalf of the Afghans represent no change, saying the administration previously had planned to allow Afghans to battle the Taliban on their own.

"It's a very significant change from what the president spoke about," he said. "I think there are a lot of options being reconsidered right now" — including the announced plan to withdraw half of the American force by the end of 2015 and the balance in 2016, he said.

The U.S. official speaking on the condition of anonymity said there haven't been any changes yet to the withdrawal plan, but added, "I don't know how firm that is." The drawdown plan will be considered by commanders in the context of conditions on the ground, the official said, echoing statements by ISAF commander Gen. John Campbell, who assured Congress at his confirmation hearing in July he would provide his best estimate of what is required.

Kagan, of the American Enterprise Institute, agreed the administration has made a fundamental change in the mission, but said that unlike other observers, he didn't see it as an expansion — just maintenance of the status quo.

"It appears the administration had actually been considering severely constraining the mission but has decided not to," Kagan said.

The idea that the United States would remain in Afghanistan in part to conduct counterterrorism operations aimed at protecting the United States, but not to intervene to help the Afghans, never made much sense, he said.

"If we're only going after al-Qaida and we're not helping the Afghans fight the insurgents that threaten their state, what, exactly, are we doing for the Afghans and why should we continue to expect their cooperation?" Kagan said.

The next required step is to abandon the plan to pull out all U.S. troops by the end of Obama's term, Kagan said.

"We've seen the White House almost make a very bad decision and catch itself, but it is leaving another bad decision on the table — that being the troop withdrawal," he said.

Lisa Curtis, a senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative Washington think tank, said the Republican congressional takeover would drive discussion about modifying drawdown plans.

"The new Republican-controlled Congress is likely to try to convince the White House to reconsider its plans to completely withdraw US forces by the end of 2016, arguing that the withdrawal schedule should be driven by conditions on the ground, not domestic political time lines," she wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes.

More important than troop numbers or drawdown schedules, however, is cogent analysis of what Afghanistan needs and how the United States can help, said Anthony Cordesman, a security analyst for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based think tank.

Obama's order allowing operations against the Taliban on behalf of the ANSF was a recognition of the fact that Afghan forces can't stand on their own and need help, he said. But it remains to be seen if Obama will take further steps to shore up an Afghan government that faces a severe military test.

"All that this really is so far is a very limited increase in capability to meet the mission requirement," he said. "But it is without any coherent plan as to what's involved in accomplishing our aims in Afghanistan."

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## NATION

# Police violence cases stir protests, debate

By DEEPTI HAJELA  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Thousands of people of diverse races and ethnicities united by anger took to the streets from New York City to San Francisco for a second straight night to protest a grand jury clearing a white police officer in the chokehold death of an unarmed black man.

Grandparents marched with their grandchildren. Experienced activists stood alongside newcomers, and protesters of all colors chanted slogans.

Tensions were already high after a grand jury last week cleared an officer in the shooting death of Michael Brown, 18, in Ferguson, Mo. Then in New York City on Wednesday came the decision that Officer Daniel Pantaleo would not be indicted in the chokehold death of Eric Garner. In both cases, the officers were white and the victims were black.

The two decisions stirred a conversation across the U.S. about race, police training and the grand jury process.

"We're under siege and it has to stop," Harlem resident Judy Edwards, 61, said at a rally Thursday night in lower Manhattan's Foley Square.

The black woman was accompanied by her daughter and twin 10-year-old grandchildren, a boy and a girl. She said it was important to her that the children saw a world that was racially mixed and diverse in many other ways all insisting upon the same thing — that something must be done.

That was the message, too, in cities across America: Atlanta,



JASON DECROW/AP

**Protesters rallying against a grand jury's decision not to indict the police officer involved in the death of Eric Garner sing Thursday in the Brooklyn borough of New York as they carry a collection of mock coffins bearing the names of victims of fatal police encounters.**

Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Minneapolis, Oakland, San Francisco and Washington, among them. Sign-carrying, chanting demonstrators marched down heavily traveled streets and shut down highways and bridges. Politicians talked about the need for better police training, body cameras and changes in the grand jury process to restore faith in the legal system.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said a "long string of events" involving the deaths of black men

at the hands of police, not just the Garner case, threaten to erode the belief many Americans have in the nation's criminal justice system.

Cuomo, speaking on NBC's "Today" on Friday, said the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson and similar previous cases in New York City show that it's necessary to "pull back the lens to understand it's not just about Eric Garner."

The governor said if people don't feel they're fairly repre-

sented by the justice system, "you have a fundamental problem."

President Barack Obama also weighed in, saying one of the chief issues at stake is "making sure that people have confidence that police and law enforcement and prosecutors are serving everybody equally."

But U.S. Rep. Peter King told The Associated Press: "The black community is not right to be upset about the ruling. If this were a white person, it would have been the same thing."

## Ferguson marchers near Mo. Capitol

The Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — About 50 people protesting the police shooting of Michael Brown were expected to arrive at the Missouri Capitol after a 130-mile march from the shooting site in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson.

Protesters planned to arrive at Jefferson City about noon Friday and gather at a garden near the governor's mansion. Later, they planned to walk up a short hill for a rally at the Capitol.

The march has been organized by the NAACP and the walk began Saturday. On Wednesday, as the march passed through the rural town of Rosebud, some people yelled obscenities and displayed a Confederate flag.

A grand jury decided last week not to indict Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson, who is white, in the Aug. 9 fatal shooting of the black 18-year-old.

# Cameras worn by police are no panacea, experts say

By TAMI ABDOLLAH  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Police body cameras have become a rallying cry in the wake of racially charged decisions by grand juries in Ferguson, Mo., and New York City, but experts caution that increased use of the devices may raise more questions than answers.

Often what is filmed may appear excessive to a person unfamiliar with police work, even though the conduct may be legal.

"There's this saying in policing: 'It's lawful, but awful.' It's technically legal to do that, but it's a terrible thing to do ... We have to work on the awful piece, that's what we need to focus on," said Jim Bueermann, who heads the nonprofit Police Foundation.

Officers in one of every six departments around the country now patrol with tiny cameras on their chests, lapels or sunglasses. And President Barack Obama wants to spend \$74 million to equip another 50,000 with them around the country.

A camera captured a white New York police officer applying a chokehold that led to the death



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

**A Los Angeles Police officer wears a camera during a demonstration in the city in January.**

of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man. In Ferguson, there was no camera showing what happened when a white police officer fatally shot Michael Brown, a black man.

In both cases, grand juries declined to indict the officers.

Many law enforcement offi-

cials support cameras' use and say they are effective.

The police department in Rialto, Calif., found after a yearlong University of Cambridge study last year that the cameras led to an 89 percent drop in complaints against officers, possibly reining in misbehavior on the part of

the public and officers, as well as ultimately limiting department liability.

"If it were up to me, every officer walking around in a uniform would be wearing a body camera," said Martin J. Mayer, a California-based attorney who has defended law enforcement agencies for more than 40 years.

Most civil libertarians support their expansion despite concerns about the development of policies governing their use and their impact on privacy. Rank-and-file officers worry about being constantly under watch, or that an errant comment may be used by a supervisor to derail their careers.

Officers, however, generally have the law on their side.

A 1989 U.S. Supreme Court case concluded that claims an officer used excessive force must be judged by whether the officer's actions were "objectively reasonable" in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them" at the time.

With video evidence, "we're being forced to confront exactly what these legal standards mean," said Peter Bibring, a staff

attorney for the ACLU of Southern California. "It provides the public a much better foundation to draw their own conclusions about what police are actually doing, and whether they believe it's appropriate."

Mayer said that in most states, the penal code allows officers to use "the amount of force necessary to repel and overcome" force used by an individual. "It's not just to match. It's to overcome it," he said.

Camera footage provides an independent record from the officer's perspective and tangible evidence that cannot be changed, unlike often malleable and faulty eyewitness accounts, experts say. But video is limited, only showing what's in front of it after the camera is turned on.

That allows for interpretation and ambiguity that can inflame the public, regardless of what the law allows.

"At the end of the day, if people don't like the lack of an indictment, then they have to look at what the legal standard is in these cases. Sometimes that's the law," Bueermann said.



## NATION



Hot Wheels monster truck

# MONSTER MADNESS

Supersized trucks  
take American  
culture on the road



Lauren Dorgan and Cory McGee, above, and John Sweeney, right, work on monster trucks at Feld Entertainment in Ellenton, Fla.

PHOTOS BY  
CHRIS O'MEARA/AP



The Associated Press

ELLENTON, Fla.

**G**rind those gears and ready the mud pit: America's latest entertainment export is monster trucks.

"We're monster trucking the world," said Kenneth Feld, CEO of Feld Entertainment, the company that owns the giant vehicles and the trademark Monster Jam events. "We're building the business globally. It's got a lot of traction."

Monster Jam had its first international show in 2004. By 2012, it had one large, international tour; in 2013, two simultaneous international tours; in 2014, three. About 55,000 people packed a stadium in Sydney in October. The trucks have made a splash from Abu Dhabi to Prague to Zurich.

"Going on to 2015, we'll have four parallel tours to cope with the demand in the market," said Magnus Danielsson, international vice president of Feld Motor Sports. "I would expect us to almost double the international business next year."

Florida-based Feld Entertainment, which owns the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, bought the Monster Jam brand in 2008. In 2015, the company will star Jam brand in 2008. In 2015, the company will embark on a 10-city Monster Jam tour in Brazil, as well as a three-city tour in Spain and plans for Asia and South America.

The Monster Jam shows feature enormous trucks that race and rev at ear-splitting decibels. They crush numerous old cars with satisfying regularity

and leap into the air. The tires are often 66 inches tall and the trucks stand about 12 feet high.

The trucks themselves have different themes. The black-and-neon green "Grave Digger" is probably the most popular, while the "Zombie" is frightening and the "Monster Mutt Rottweiler," a dog-themed truck, is kind of cute.

While Feld isn't the only monster truck event promoter in the world, it is the largest. Other, smaller promoters worldwide are getting in on the act.

"There is a global appeal," said Marty Garza, spokesman for the Monster Truck Racing Association, a U.S.-based group that establishes safety guidelines. "It's the unpredictability. The sense of excitement visually, the vibrations and the sounds. It appeals to all senses. It seems to have a broad appeal to broad demographics. It crosses all cultures."

Nigel Morris, the recently retired United Kingdom-based driver of Bigfoot #17, said: "The things that people love about monster trucks in America are the things they love in other countries. It's a dramatic appeal to broad demographics. It crosses all cultures."

Some countries have even started their own knock-off monster truck competitions — Monster Mania last spring in Moscow attracted more than 15,000 fans.

"Absolutely everybody loves Monster Trucks. It is just big, loud and abusive," Tony Dixon, a British driver of the truck called "Swamp Thing," told the Moscow Times.

## MONSTER ORIGINS

Monster trucking has its roots in rural mud-bogging and truck pulling in the U.S. The original monster truck is believed to be Bigfoot, a 1974 Ford F-250 four-wheel-drive pickup from Missouri, whose owner, Bob Chandler, videotaped himself crushing cars in a field with the truck. A star was born, and Bigfoot appeared in the 1981 film "Take this Job and Shove It."

— The Associated Press

## NATION

## ACA premium increases modest in 2015

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON—Many people covered under President Barack Obama's health care law will face higher premiums next year, the administration acknowledged Thursday. While the average increases are modest, it's more fodder for the nation's political battles over health care.

Officials stressed that millions of current HealthCare.gov customers can mitigate the financial hit if they're willing to shop around for another plan in a more competitive online marketplace. Subsidies will also help cushion the impact.

Premiums for the most popular

type of plan are going up an average of 5 percent in 35 states where Washington is running the health insurance exchanges this year and will do so again in 2015, said a report from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Monthly premiums are one of the most important and politically sensitive yardsticks for Obama's health care law, which offers subsidized private insurance to people who don't have access to coverage through their jobs. Sharper premium hikes were common before it passed.

The modest average increases reported for 2015 mask bigger swings from state to state and even within regions of a state. Accord-

ing to data released by the administration, some communities will still see double-digit hikes, while others are seeing decreases. Most are somewhere in the middle.

"Prior to the Affordable Care Act taking place, we saw double-digit increases in health care costs in this country," said White House spokesman Josh Earnest. "Those were routine."

Many people who go back to the website "will now find that their costs are limited to only 5 percent on average," he said, "a much lower cost increase than was in place before the Affordable Care Act."

Even after Thursday's report, the bottom line remains blurry.

Last year, the administration released its analysis of premiums before the start of open enrollment season. This year's snapshot came more than two weeks after sign-ups had started and covered 13 fewer states. Among the missing states were two of the largest, California and New York.

Last year's report provided average premiums for three types of plans across 48 states—close to a national number. This year's report has no comparable statistic.

With both chambers of Congress under Republican control next year, the health care law will face even closer scrutiny from opponents still pursuing its repeal.

Nonetheless, industry ex-

perts said the picture appears positive for consumers and the administration.

"Benchmark premiums going into year two of the health law are very stable nationally, driven largely by strong competition among insurers," said Larry Levitt of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation.

Administration officials said that on the whole, the market for individual insurance has gotten better for consumers.

"In today's marketplace, insurers are competing for business," HHS Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell said in a statement. "Returning customers may find an even better deal if they shop and save."



COURTESY OF NASA/AP

U.S. Navy crews from the USS Anchorage begin recovering the parachutes while other teams begin safing the spacecraft as it floats in the Pacific Ocean on Friday

## 'Perfect' flight for spacecraft Orion

By MARCIA DUNN  
The Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.—NASA's new Orion spacecraft made a "bull's-eye" splashdown in the Pacific on Friday following a dramatic test flight that took it to a zenith of 3,604 miles and ushered in a new era of human exploration aiming for Mars.

The unmanned test flight ended 4½ hours after it began and achieved at least one record: flying farther and faster than any capsule built for humans since the Apollo moon program.

"There's your new spacecraft, America," Mission Control commentator Rob Navias said as the Orion capsule neared the water 270 miles off Mexico's Baja peninsula. Navias called the journey "the most perfect flight you could ever imagine."

NASA is counting on future Orions to carry astronauts beyond Earth's orbit to asteroids and, ultimately, the grand prize: Mars.

The agency reported some positive results, saying onboard computers were unaffected by high radiation in space.

The capsule reached a peak altitude more than 14 times farther from Earth than the International Space Station. No spacecraft designed for astronauts had gone so far since Apollo 17—NASA's final moon shot—42 years ago.

NASA needed to send Orion that high in order to set the crew module up for a 20,000-mph, 4,000-degree Fahrenheit entry. That was considered the most critical part of the entire flight—testing the largest of its kind heat shield for survival before humans climb aboard.

Orion's final descent was aided by eight parachutes deployed in sequence. A crew on board would have endured as much as 8.2 Gs, or 8.2 times the force of Earth's gravity, double the Gs of a returning Russian Soyuz capsule, according to NASA.

Earth shrank from view through Orion's capsule window during their trip out to space, and stunning images were relayed back home. Its return was recorded by an unmanned drone flying over the recovery zone, providing more spectacular views. Helicopters then relayed images of the

crew module bobbing in the water. Three of the five air bags deployed properly, enough to keep the capsule floating upright.

The U.S. Navy was there to recover the spacecraft 630 miles southwest of San Diego, where it will be brought to land. All the parachutes did their job, but only two of the eight were recovered.

Orion's debut was designed to be brief—just two orbits of Earth.

NASA is now "one step closer" to putting humans aboard Orion, said NASA Administrator Charles Bolden Jr. He called it "Day One of the Mars era."

Everything went NASA's way Friday as the Delta IV rocket carried Orion into orbit.

From the International Space Station, six astronauts watched the events unfold via a live TV feed.

In Houston, NASA's Mission Control took over the entire operation once Orion was aloft. The flight program was loaded into Orion's computers well in advance, allowing the spacecraft to fly essentially on autopilot. Flight controllers—all shuttle veterans—could intervene in the event of an emergency breakdown.

## DOJ: Community policing key to reform in Cleveland

By MARK GILLISPIE  
The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — A commitment to community policing is one of the key reforms the U.S. Department of Justice expects from the Cleveland police after issuing a report that says officers too often use excessive force and violate people's civil rights.

The DOJ spent 18 months investigating use-of-force policies in Cleveland after a series of well-publicized incidents, including the killing of two unarmed civilians in a hail of police gunfire after a high-speed chase.

The DOJ's finding will result in city officials, community leaders and others devising a plan to reform the police department. That plan must be approved by a federal judge and will be overseen by an independent monitor.

The report issued by the DOJ takes to task the entire department, from patrol officers to police brass. It criticizes officers for endangering the lives of citizens and fellow officers by unnecessarily firing their guns, hitting suspects in the head with their

weapons and punching and using Tasers on people who are already handcuffed.

This was the second time the Justice Department has conducted an investigation of excessive force by Cleveland police. In 2004, the DOJ left it up to Cleveland to fix its problems.

Efforts at changing the department's culture by instituting community policing tactics were tried in the 1990s without much success.

Mayors in Cleveland have for decades struggled to rein in a police department that patrolled neighborhoods where people often are distrustful. Police officers, in turn, often don't trust the people they're sworn to protect. Mayor Frank Jackson was among those that urged the DOJ to come to Cleveland to investigate the department.

The report references an interview with a former police commander who "believes the culture within [the department] is antithetical to a community police mentality and that officer training instills in officers an 'us-against-them' mentality." One of the primary factors of community policing requires officers to leave their patrol cars and to engage residents instead of just answering radio calls and arresting them.

## 3 cities vie to host presidential library

WASHINGTON — Three U.S. cities that President Barack Obama once called home are trying to outdo one another as the competition to host his future presidential library comes to a close.

Next week, a handful of Obama's oldest friends and associates will start judging proposals from two universities in Chicago and one each in New York and Honolulu, and by the end of March, Obama and the first lady

will announce the winner. Knowing the future library will be a prominent tourist attraction and historical site, each community is offering Obama prime real estate, financial backing and grand visions for what his library could look like.

The Barack Obama Foundation has requested specifics on a host of items, including local zoning and transportation, architectural design and management plans. But the foundation's board has made clear that a university's ability to help pay for the project will also be a factor.

From The Associated Press

# WAR ON TERRORISM



PHOTOS BY JAKE SIMKIN/AP

A woman watches as mortars explode nearby in Kobani, Syria, on Nov. 22. Most residents of the town fled across the border to Turkey when the Islamic State group fighters came to the town in September.

## Kurds endure amid Kobani rubble

The Associated Press

KOBANI, Syria — One of the few signs of life in this northern Syria border town is the old bakery, where Kurdish fighters battling the Islamic State group.

Closed down for some 20 years, the production line now bakes two tons of doughy bread every day to energize the fighters and feed the spatter of civilians left behind.

"We came and fixed up (the bakery) for use in these difficult times," said Fathi Misiro, a fighter with the People's Protection Units, or YPG, who works in the bakery. "Ten days ago ... it was worse here. We've been helping people and sending bread to them daily."

An exclusive report shot by a videojournalist inside Kobani late last month offered a rare, in-depth glimpse of the destruction that more than two months of fighting has inflicted on the Kurdish town in northern Syria by the Turkish border.

Outside the bakery, children playfully jump in and out of foxholes — barely fazed by the Islamic State group's explosions nearby. Kobani as it was has been virtually erased. Rubble is all that remains of people's homes and their memories. Shops are gutted. Schools are flattened.

Kurdish fighters backed by small numbers of Iraqi peshmerga forces and Syrian rebels are locked in what they see as an existential battle against the Islamic State group, which swept into their town in mid-September. The advance was part of a summer blitz against the Islamic State group overran large parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq.

The YPG, an armed secular faction, is at the forefront of the struggle to save Kobani.

Helped by more than 270 airstrikes from a U.S.-led coalition and an American airstrip



Above: Bread is distributed by the Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, in Kobani, Syria. The chief baker serves bread to some 3,600 civilians daily.

Left: A young boy eats bread at his family's makeshift home in the buffer zone near the Turkish border in Kobani.

ians opted to stay with the hope that fighting will soon subside. It is a small fraction of the population of 50,000 that once filled these streets.

They sleep in their cars or makeshift tents on the outskirts of the town, where barbed wire and land mines mark the Turkish border. Militant-fired mortars rain down on them regularly.

Some farmers escaped with their machinery and livestock. Others lost everything.

"My sheep were taken. I lost my cow, for God's sake, my hens, my bedding, our sacks of wheat were stolen," one woman said, expressing gratitude for the bread the YPG fighters are providing.

of weapons, the Kurds have succeeded in halting the militants' advance and believe that a corner has been turned.

But the battle comes at a heavy price for the town's remaining residents. While most managed to flee across the nearby border with Turkey, some 2,000 Kurdish civil-

## Congress, Obama play waiting game on authorizing war

By KAREN DEYOUNG  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama and Congress agree on the need to pass a new legal authority for the fast-expanding U.S. war against the Islamic State group. But with uncharacteristic mutual deference, each has been waiting for the other to propose it first.

At the White House, officials express certainty that any legal language Obama suggests would automatically become just one more target for partisan disagreement.

On Capitol Hill, disagreement about what such a measure would say, when it should be considered and what role the administration should play in formulating it have led to stasis.

Several lawmakers tried to bypass the torpor on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue on Thursday morning. The venue was a business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where nothing related to the Islamic State appeared on a brief agenda of diplomatic confirmations and a measure to help poor countries access clean water.

Three senators proposed amendments to the Water for the World Act. A measure introduced by Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., who has opposed most U.S. intervention in the Middle East and elsewhere, called for a congressional declaration of war, the first since 1942, albeit with a restriction on presidential use of ground troops.

A proposal by Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., the committee chairman, authorized the president to use the military as he determined "necessary and appropriate" against the Islamic State, but also prohibited "ground combat operations." Like Paul, Menendez limited the authorization to three years.

A third amendment, by Sen. Timothy Kaine, D-Va., proposed "all necessary and appropriate force," but only including airstrikes, and only for one year.

Several senators bemoaned the lack of substantive debate over such a portentous matter. Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., the ranking minority member and a co-sponsor of a water bill, called the meeting "almost a scene in Moby-Dick."

Many blamed the White House for failing to produce legislative language and criticized its inability to produce high-level wit-nessing on the issue, despite months of congressional requests.

Some Republicans said Democrats were only interested in having a vote before they become the Senate minority in January. Democrats countered that their constituents were demand-

ing a full airing of the issue.

But the committee is often an island of relative comity in the rough seas of legislative partisanship these days, and by noon the senators had agreed to give the administration one more chance to explain itself. On Monday, Menendez said, they would hold a hearing at which they expected Secretary of State John Kerry — who has ducked several previous invitations — to appear.

Even if the committee manages to vote on a proposal next week, the likelihood is nil that an official Authorization of the Use of Military Force against the Islamic State will pass before Congress adjourns Thursday.

To some extent, the lack of urgency has come from Obama himself. He has called for a new authorization for the war, but said he doesn't really need it.

A senior administration official who agreed to discuss White House strategy on the condition of anonymity said that the president may eventually propose his own language for an authorization bill. "That may still happen," the official said. "But if we do, it will become clear why that is not the magic elixir required for bipartisanship to spread."

Asked whether the White House would be comfortable with the limited authority spelled out in the proposed amendments, the official said that while it could accept "reasonable limits," a one-year authorization was too short for a conflict Obama has said is likely to last for years. The need for repeated reauthorization, the official said, would just provide more excuses for legislative "drama."

"We would have to discuss" restrictions such as a prohibition against the use of combat troops, the official said. "That said, the president has been crystal-clear and does not envision a scenario in which U.S. ground troops would be in place."

Some lawmakers insist the restriction is necessary. For others, the idea of a war without troops is nonsense. "What's the message to ISIS?" Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., asked committee members Thursday, using an acronym for the Islamic State. "Hey, guys, all we're going to do is bomb you, no matter what happens? That's crazy."

Kaine, a leading proponent of action on the issue, said he is not wedded to his proposal or any other.

But after four months of war, he said, including more than 1,100 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria, nearly 3,000 U.S. ground troops who have been deployed or authorized for deployment, a cost of more than \$1 billion and three American military deaths, "there's a strange conspiracy of silence."



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# OPINION

## Perry prepping, but run will be rough

By CARL P. LEUBSDORF  
The Dallas Morning News

**R**ick Perry now is entertaining an array of top Republican fund-raisers, policy experts and political backers at the Governor's Mansion in Austin, using the holiday season and his last month as Texas governor to pave the way for a second White House bid.

Following more than a year spent in extensive public travel and private weekly sessions with policy experts aimed at improving his image and knowledge, political adviser Jeff Miller said Perry is playing host to "political and financial leaders from around the country" to help gauge the support he would have if he runs.

But Miller said in an interview Wednesday that Perry "has not made a firm decision."

By signs, the 64-year-old Perry faces a daunting challenge. Though two years of study and travel have prepared him better both politically and substantively, the 2016 Republican field will be much stronger, including up to eight current or former governors.

He has responded to his 2012 failure with changes both symbolic and substantive. He made his appearance more professional than cowboy-like by donning dark-rimmed glasses and shedding his boots. And he studied the kinds of issues that sometimes tripped him up, most notably when he failed in a televised debate to remember the third Cabinet department he proposed to scrap.

His now-famous "Oops" came to symbolize a campaign that began with him as a potential favorite but faltered amid his post-surgical back problems and a series of controversial statements and poor appearances.

Miller said this month's sessions are an expanded version of those he has been having, intended in part to show he is comfortable discussing the complex national and international issues with which presidential candidates must cope.

But Perry's biggest problem might be the GOP's far different outlook from four years ago, when a lackluster field vied to present the most conservative positions in their fight to oppose a president favored for re-election.

In 2016, the presidency will be open, and President Barack Obama's unpopularity — plus the pattern in which parties generally hold the White House for just two terms — mean the GOP nominee will have a real chance to win.

The field could include such prominent figures as Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, the kinder and gentler son of libertarian former Texas Rep. Ron Paul; former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, trying to become the third President Bush; and the governors of such major battleground states as New Jersey (Chris Christie), Ohio (John Kasich) and Wisconsin (Scott Walker).

One benefit is that Perry can contrast Texas, with its stronger economy and lower unemployment during his 14-year tenure, with the lagging Rust Belt states.

But two potential aspirants threaten his Texas fundraising base: freshman Sen.

Ted Cruz, who led several state Republican polls; and Bush, whose brother and father live in Texas and whose son is now Texas land commissioner.

So does the threat of an embarrassing trial after Perry's indictment in Austin on a charge of abusing power for trying to force the resignation of the district attorney investigating potential state corruption after her conviction for drunken driving.

Besides the challenge of raising money, Perry's lingering debate image means his performances on the trail and in high-profile settings such as debates will be closely scrutinized.

Though generally solidly conservative, his defense of a Texas law granting lower in-state college tuition to illegal immigrants energized opposition from vocal foes of immigration reform.

Finally, Perry is older than most major candidates except likely Democratic front-runner Hillary Rodham Clinton, a possible handicap when the public might be seeking a fresh face.

But with the proper preparation that was lacking last time, Perry's superior retail politicking skills and engaging Reaganesque manner could help him in the months before the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary formally open the race in February 2016.

If he runs, his immediate challenge will be to raise enough money and perform well enough during those months to reach those tests with a chance of winning.

Carl P. Leubsdorf is the former Washington bureau chief of The Dallas Morning News.

## Intel panel will miss Rogers' evenhandedness

By DAVID IGNATIUS

**T**he House Intelligence Committee, a rare island of bipartisanship in recent years, may soon become a more confrontational arena with the retirement of its chairman, Rep. Mike Rogers.

Rogers is scheduled to be replaced by Rep. Devin Nunes, a conservative California Republican whose critical comments about Benghazi have made him a favorite with Fox News. House Speaker John Boehner announced the Nunes appointment two weeks ago in what appeared to be a concession to right-wing Republicans who want a more adversarial role for this key committee.

A sign of what may lie ahead is that Nunes hasn't publicly endorsed the Intelligence Committee report last month that cleared the CIA, the military and top Obama administration officials of wrongdoing in the 2012 attack on the U.S. compound in Benghazi, Libya. This report by Rogers' committee was the latest debunking of the Benghazi issue, but it did little to convince conservative Republicans.

Sen. Rand Paul, for example, called the report "a C.Y.A. attempt designed to protect incompetent politicians and government agents," Sen. Lindsey Graham told CNN: "I think the report is full of crap."

Nunes had sent Boehner in November 2013 a list of "critical outstanding questions" about Benghazi, including such explosive issues as "possible witness intimidation." But, perhaps unknown to Nunes, sources say the committee had already received evidence that rebutted those allegations.

The leadership change on the House panel comes at a delicate time when the in-

telligence community is coping with severe challenges, from the Islamic State's takeover of northern Iraq and Syria to Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Intelligence agency officials worry that if bipartisan cooperation is lost in the House, the oversight process may become politicized again, as it often was under previous chairmen.

Rogers has been a noteworthy exception to the culture of dysfunction on Capitol Hill. When he became committee chairman in 2011, the Michigan Republican made a pact with Maryland Rep. C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, the ranking Democrat, to avoid the political grandstanding that had paralyzed the committee for years.

By working together, Rogers and Ruppersberger managed to pass an intelligence authorization bill in 2011, the first such legislation in six years, and to do so every year since. They began by stripping politically charged amendments from the measure, including language on climate change, use of contractors, and Guantanamo. He insisted on joint budget briefings by Republican and Democratic staff members.

Boehner's decision to pick Nunes over other Republicans who wanted the job surprised some members, given that the speaker had chosen Rogers and defended him from right-wing criticism. A Nunes spokesman said the new chairman intends to consult closely with Democrats. He said Nunes hadn't taken a position on the Benghazi report because the committee had to operate "one chairman at a time."

Rogers, a former FBI agent, decided to retire from the House this year and become a radio talk-show host, perhaps in part to build a broader political base. He has become one of the most prominent Republican voices on foreign-policy and intel-

ligence issues, appearing 27 times on the Sunday TV interview shows in 2013, more than any other guest.

Rogers has often criticized President Barack Obama on foreign policy issues, but he has generally backed the intelligence community. He has been especially supportive of James Clapper, a career intelligence officer who is director of national intelligence. In an interview this week, Rogers said Clapper had "performed the best of any DNI" since the job was created in 2005.

Rogers said that, in his view, "the jury is still out" on CIA Director John Brennan. "Can he shake off the umbilical cord to the White House?" Rogers asked. Brennan served as Obama's adviser on intelligence for four years before becoming CIA director. Rogers said he hoped Brennan wouldn't rush into a new plan for reorganizing the CIA that would merge analysts and operators into geographical units.

It's important that the House and Senate intelligence committees operate effectively, with bipartisan trust, because the intelligence community badly needs constructive oversight. When the members and staffs work together, they can hold the agencies accountable, when they bicker, it's harder to maintain that accountability.

Rogers has been a pragmatic committee chairman of the sort that once dominated Congress but has become a disappearing species. The inertia of today's Washington troubles Rogers. "We've gotten to the place where people would rather have zero progress than 75 percent. I don't understand that," he told me. Unfortunately, this voice for adult supervision of intelligence is about to hand in his gavel.

David Ignatius is a member of Washington Post Writers Group.

## OPINION

# Putin proves he can't handle life after luck

BY LEONID BERSHIDSKY  
Bloomberg News

“Luck,” wrote the U.S. “gonzo journalist” Hunter S. Thompson, “is a very thin wire between survival and disaster, and not many people can keep their balance on it.” Russian President Vladimir Putin, who Thursday gave the most pitiful state-of-the-nation speech of his extraordinarily lucky career, is falling off the wire.

The speech was a stark contrast to Putin's regal performance on March 18, when he called on the Russian parliament to approve the annexation of Crimea. That day, Putin basked in the glory of the moment. Thursday, he came to the rostrum red-eyed and tired-looking: he had reportedly arrived at the Kremlin in the early hours of the morning, because of a bloody raid by Islamist militants in Chechnya. As Putin spoke, he stumbled over his words more than I've ever heard him do. It was the text he delivered, however, that testified to weakness in the normally macho Russian leader.

The speech appeared to have been written before the price of oil, on which Russia's economic edifice has been built since Soviet times, started its downward spiral in the markets. Putin made no mention of oil at all. He rambled on about how important Crimea was to Russia and what he keeps calling a coup d'état in Ukraine. He asked the audience to applaud the agricultural laborers who brought in a good harvest this year. He said everyone should work harder, be organized and responsible. And he quoted his favorite nationalist philosopher, Ivan Ilyin, on freedom — a good thing so long as it benefits the nation. Oh, and he spent about 10 minutes talking about schools.

If anyone expected Putin to present a coherent survival plan for the Russian economy under low oil prices, they were disappointed. He said little to please the

quasi-liberal economists who hinted recently he might adopt their proposals to focus on deregulation and anti-corruption. He did say businesses should be subject to fewer inspections by government agencies, and that the current tax regime should be frozen for the next four years, but these promises rang hollow. Putin has signed several laws to raise taxes on property and small businesses recently, including just a few days ago.

Perhaps the biggest economic news in the speech was Putin's offer of a tax amnesty for capital repatriated from offshore havens. “We all understand that the money may be of different origin, it could be earned or received by all kinds of means,” Putin said. “But I am convinced that we must finally turn the offshore page in the history of our economy and our country.” That, too, sounded faintly ridiculous in view of record capital flight so far this year — to the tune of \$85.2 billion, according to the Central Bank. Russian business shows no signs of wanting to “turn the offshore page,” quite the contrary.

As the president rambled on tiredly, a sour-looking audience of pro-Putin legislators clapped without enthusiasm and the ruble depreciated. Russia's currency stood at 52.66 to the U.S. dollar when the speech was due to begin, weakening to 53.60 as Putin launched into self-justification on Crimea and Ukraine. Then it strengthened a little, to 53.04, when he mustered a little steel in his voice, to say: “The authorities know the rules of the club, and there exist tools to influence them. The time has come to use these tools.” It seemed for a moment that Putin could still inspire fear, if not belief — but no. The ruble soon resumed its slide, and at the time of this writing hovered above 53.70.

The speech's basic premise: Putin's only suggestion on how to manage the plunging national currency was a vague one to protect those on low incomes. At the same time he suggested the ruble's slide should advantage domestic industries, as they step in to substitute for overpriced imports in



PAVEL GOLOVIN/AP

Russian President Vladimir Putin gives his annual state-of-the-nation address in the Kremlin in Moscow on Thursday.

the next three to five years. That just gave listeners a gloomy sense that the weak currency policy was here to stay. To help industry rise to the challenge, Putin talked of forcing mammoth state-owned companies to source more of their purchases locally, and of recapitalizing banks so they could issue more loans to enterprises. But with what?

Wednesday, Putin signed the Russian federal budget for the next three years, based on an oil price of \$100 per barrel — well above the current level. Yet in his speech, he talked blithely of doubling investment in road and construction. He is clearly in denial regarding the economic hurdles Russia faces if the oil price remains low in the medium term and his advisers appear unwilling to burst his bubble. After economy minister Alexei Ulyukayev predicted Russia's gross domestic product

would shrink by 0.8 percent in 2015, and that real wages would drop by 3.8 percent, Putin's economics aide Andrei Belousov dismissed the forecast as “a bunch of numbers” and a “technical mistake.”

Putin doesn't appear to have any kind of short-term or medium-term plan for Russia's economy that's compatible with the dual impacts of falling oil prices and sanctions. He has been so lucky throughout his career, as soaring commodity prices supported his self-aggrandizement, that he is at a loss now the trend has reversed. As Thompson went on to write in “Fear and Loathing in America,” people who count on luck don't last long in the business of defusing bombs and disarming land mines.” Which is exactly what Russia's leader is attempting to do today.

Leonid Bershidsky is a Berlin-based contributor to Bloomberg View.

# Arab Spring gets a death sentence in Egypt trial

BY NOAH FELDMAN  
Bloomberg News

When 188 people are sentenced to death in the same trial, as happened Tuesday in Egypt, you know something's gone terribly wrong in the system of justice. It's undeniable that there was a protest in the Kerdasa neighborhood of Cairo on Aug. 14, 2013, the same day that Egyptian security and military forces cleared Muslim Brotherhood supporters out of Tahrir Square some 10 miles away. Eleven policemen died, according to news reports.

But a collective trial and conviction ignores the structure of individual justice that criminal law is supposed to deliver, no matter the country. It's the latest depressing chapter in the death of Egypt's short-lived democracy — and a reason for the United States to rethink its instinctive tendency to back the government of former general Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi.

Let's start with the trial. It's always difficult for a government to hold individuals criminally responsible for events that take place in a mob environment. As a result, any regime that wants to respond harshly to mass violence will be tempted to round up all the people who can be connected, however loosely, to the underlying events and put them on trial at the same time.

What's wrong with such mass trials?

They repudiate the basic principle of criminal responsibility, which in the modern era has come to be understood as individual, rather than collective. It's only morally justifiable to punish someone for criminal wrongdoing if he or she in particular has committed a criminal act. It's not enough to be part of a group of which some members have acted wrongly. That goes for a crowd or a mob, or even a mob group, which should not be held criminally responsible as a collective. And it also goes for a crowd assembled more or less spontaneously in protest.

It's true that, as a result, some people who are morally culpable for harm may go free. But it's also true that a government committed to enforcing the law has the opportunity to call witnesses to try to ascertain which individuals performed particular criminal actions. The burden to amass this kind of individualized evidence is the price the government pays for making its enforcement of the criminal law morally legitimate.

Given this background, it's not surprising that the governments most likely to use mass criminal trials are regimes that don't care much about the legitimacy of their criminal-law systems. If the point is to suppress opposition to the government and show who's in charge, it will seem more important to assert power than to punish the right people in an environment of par-

ticularized justice.

Since the ascendance of el-Sissi to the presidency, the Egyptian government has demonstrated that its priority is to re-establish fully the control of the security complex made out of the military, the secret police and the courts. In March and April, 529 and 683 people, respectively, were sentenced to death in trials in Minya. The total number of death sentences was later reduced to about 200, but the point had been made: Resistance to the government would be met with harsh and indiscriminate punishment.

What's most unfortunate is that this assertion of law-like lawlessness is taking place at precisely the same moment when the U.S. is re-establishing its relationship with the el-Sissi government. President Barack Obama met el-Sissi officially in New York during the United Nations General Assembly at the end of September. Military aid to Egypt, temporarily held back by an administration struggling with a law that forbids sending aid to a country that has experienced a military coup, has been re-established.

As a matter of realpolitik, it's easy to see why the U.S. is prepared to embrace el-Sissi. He has, after all, won his fight to suppress the democratically elected government of Mohammed Morsi. The U.S. has a long record of allying itself with Egypt's dictators, from Anwar Sadat to

Hosni Mubarak. In the current Middle East, any regime prepared to cling to the U.S. probably looks like an appealing ally.

Yet there are costs to renewing an alliance with a government that is in the middle of such blatant violations of basic rights to a fair trial. No one in the region observing the contradictions will fail to notice that the U.S. cares little about the human rights violations of its allies, and a lot about rights violations of its strategic enemies.

It might be said in response that because everyone in the Middle East already considers the U.S. to be hypocritical with respect to rights, further hypocrisy is actually costless. But that sort of cynicism can justify any outcome, no matter how outrageous.

The truth is that the U.S. could pressure el-Sissi not to allow mass trials reminiscent of Stalinist purges of political opponents. So long as it doesn't, it remains complicit in the distortion of criminal justice. When it comes to demanding compliance with human-rights norms, credibility is crucial. Unless the U.S. insists on legitimate criminal justice now, when its leverage is greatest and el-Sissi is still figuring out how he'll govern, it may forfeit the chance to exercise pressure later.

Noah Feldman, a Bloomberg View columnist, is a professor of constitutional and international law at Harvard and the author of six books, most recently “Cool War: The Future of Global Competition.”

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Officials: College had strippers lure students

**FL** MIAMI — Prosecutors say a for-profit Florida college used exotic dancers as admissions officers, falsified documents and coached students to lie on financial forms as it fraudulently obtained millions of dollars in federal money.

The Florida Attorney General and the U.S. Attorney in Miami announced Wednesday that they were joining an ongoing civil lawsuit against FastTrain College and former owner Alejandro Amor, 56.

FastTrain is now defunct. It operated seven Florida campuses and was based in Miami.

The complaint says that from at least January 2009 through June 2012, FastTrain and Amor bilked the U.S. Department of Education out of millions of dollars with falsified grant applications. The complaint says strippers on at least one campus tried to draw young, male students.

Amor was charged criminally in October. A telephone message left at a listing for Amor wasn't immediately returned.

## Police: Woman tried to electrocute man in tub

**NY** WEBSTER — A 28-year-old woman has been charged with attempted murder after police say she tossed a plugged-in radio alarm clock into a motel bathtub while her boyfriend was in it.

Police in the Rochester suburb of Webster said that Alicia Gould and her boyfriend were in a room at motel early Friday when they got into an argument.

Officers said while the man was taking a bath, Gould threw the radio alarm clock into the water in an attempt to electrocute him.

Police said the room's ground fault interrupter went off, stopping any electrical current from making its way through the water.

Gould is being held in the Monroe County Jail on \$20,000 cash bail.

## School reviews song use after obscenities

**AL** TUSCALOOSA — The University of Alabama says it's reviewing the use of a popular song at athletic events after students turned it into an obscene chant during the Auburn game.

Athletics director Bill Battle issued a statement Wednesday saying school officials will discuss whether to continue playing "Dixieland Delight."

The song was first released by the band Alabama more than 30 years ago, and the university often plays it over the public address system at football games. Fans sing along and students add chants.

Some of the words are usually vulgar. But students added chants more often during the Auburn game to direct an obscenity at their rival university.

Battle said the university tries to act with class, and the behavior of fans is a big part of that.

## THE CENSUS

# \$400K

The approximate value of loose diamonds California police say a robber stole from a store owner in a mall parking lot. National City police Sgt. Antonio Ybarra said the owner of National Jewelers was walking to his car on Wednesday evening when the robber put a metal object against his back and told him to empty his pockets. No suspects have been identified.



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

## Out for a joggle

Barry Goldmeier, who likes to be called "The Joggler," takes advantage of the warm temperatures to run Monday in Washington, while juggling two balls and bouncing a tennis ball on a racket. Goldmeier is known in the Mid-Atlantic region for running marathons while juggling.

## Signs on bridge get honoree's name wrong

**PA** CONNELLSVILLE — Plans to honor a slain police officer who was also a Civil War veteran went awry when signs renaming a southwestern Pennsylvania bridge got his name wrong.

Connellsville police Officer McCray Robb shot by a suspect who grabbed the officer's gun on May 25, 1882.

A ceremony renaming the borough's West Crawford Avenue Bridge in Robb's honor was held Saturday. But signs printed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation that were installed Monday incorrectly identified the officer as Robb McCray.

PennDOT spokeswoman Valerie Petersen said the signs were printed based on the bill sponsored by retiring Democratic state Sen. Richard Kasunic.

An aide for incoming Republi-

can state Sen. Pat Stefano said the lawmaker will work to correct the mistake, perhaps by sponsoring an amended bill.

## Man charged with stealing tongue in pants

**FL** DELAND — Police in Florida say a Wal-Mart shopper denied slipping \$35 worth of beef tongue into his pants, but the telltale tongue told a different story.

DeLand police said Jason Puckett, 44, was charged last week with misdemeanor theft after a Wal-Mart security guard spotted him slipping two packages of tongue into his waistband.

When the guard confronted Puckett at the store's exit, Puckett denied stealing the packages and said he had put them back onto a shelf.

But the guard told authorities Puckett then removed the tongue from his pants when he didn't

think he was being watched and ran from the store.

Jail records show Puckett remained in jail Tuesday. Bail was set at \$2,500.

## Cat survives trip across US in moving box

**VA** SUFFOLK — A cat has used up at least one of its nine lives after surviving a monthlong trip in a moving box with no food or water.

Ashley Barth said her cat Mee Mooove disappeared in September as movers packed her family's belongings for a move from Suffolk, Va., to Hawaii — a nearly 5,000-mile journey.

Thirty-six days later, the boxes arrived in Hawaii. Barth said she heard a faint "meow" as the boxes were unloaded. Mee Mooove was in one of the boxes.

Barth said the cat had lost half her body weight and could barely walk.

State veterinarian offices in Virginia and Hawaii told WAVY it's unlikely a cat could survive 36 days without food or water, but not impossible.

## Long straw decides tied alderman's race

**MS** WAVELAND — Twelve years after losing a coin toss in a tied election for alderman in coastal Mississippi, independent Charles Piazza won a tie by drawing the longer of two straws.

Republican nominee Brett Lader had held a 108-106 lead Tuesday night, but verification of four affidavit ballots on Wednesday tied the race in Waveland, leading to the straw draw.

Piazza said his 2002 re-election campaign also wound up in a tie. City attorney Gary Yarbrough said the law calls for a game of chance to decide tied elections.

From wire reports



## VIDEO GAMES

# A wild, perilous journey awaits

Himalayas provide stunning backdrop for intense, action-packed 'Far Cry 4'

By BRIAN BOWERS  
Stars and Stripes

**"F**ar Cry 4" definitely delivers high adventure. The open-world shooter is set in the towering Himalayas and is packed with intense action. If that's not enough for you, a pair of ne'er-do-wells is ready to inject your character with mystery chemicals and send him on a psychedellic shooting spree among the bad guys.



In the game from Ubisoft, you play as Ajay Ghale, a young American whose deceased mother had fled the war-torn nation of Kyrat. As the action starts, you're riding a Kyatli bus on the way to scatter mom's ashes in her homeland.

But almost immediately, trouble strikes in the form of soldiers sent by the bloodthirsty dictator Pagan Min. Within minutes, most of the bus passengers are dead and you are the houseguest of the sadistic despot, who seems to be uncomfortably familiar with both you and your mother. Fortunately, Min isn't the only one who knows you're in town. Rebels known as the Golden Path agree to help you escape. Then, your adventure begins in earnest.

Anyone who has played the game's excellent predecessor — 2012's tale of a South Pacific island occupied by evil mercenaries — will find the game's basic outline very familiar. You ally yourself with indigenous freedom fighters to drive out the bad guys. This involves capturing their bases, hacking their communication towers and generally undermining their efforts across a sprawling map. And along the way, you'll meet unusual characters, hunt vicious animals and help the natives with all sorts of problems.

However, there's also quite a bit that's new and improved.

Overall grade: **A-**

The Himalayan setting is the most obvious departure from previous games in the series. You'll see different people, animals and architecture. You'll also see a different landscape — one that's absolutely breathtaking, especially if you're playing on a new-generation console. From the lush river valleys to the snow-capped peaks, the texture and detail lavished on the settings is impressive. At times, I found myself taking a break from my freedom-fighting just so I could drink in the view.

Developers also offer plenty of game-play innovations.

My favorite addition is elephants. You can ride them. You can stomp your enemies with them. They're awesome.

Other new features include mountaineering gear that allows you to climb to lofty spots and a nifty little copter that can eliminate quite a few long treks through the forest. You also can invite friends to enter your game to fight as hired guns.

Ubisoft also has boosted two of the elements that gamers enjoyed in the South Pacific adventure: outpost attacks and wing suits.

You can now fight to recapture bases that you've already captured. That might sound repetitive and downright pointless to the uninitiated. However, one of the most challenging and fun activities in the game is assaulting enemy outposts. It's always a bit disappointing when you've expelled your enemies from their final base. Now you don't have to worry about that because you can initiate a base-attack challenge whenever you like.

As for the wing suit, you can now buy it early on instead of waiting until late in the game, which means that you can spend a lot more time gliding like a bird over Kyrat's impressive landscape.

The game also gives you a few more options that affect how the story unfolds. For example, the two leaders of the Golden Path occasionally offer opposing



Photos courtesy of Ubisoft

In "Far Cry 4," players find themselves in Kyrat, a breathtaking, perilous and wild region of the Himalayas struggling under the regime of a despotic self-appointed king. Using a vast array of weapons, vehicles and animals, players will write their own story across an exotic open-world landscape.

missions — such as burning an opium plantation or capturing it so proceeds can be used to fund the rebellion. You will need to choose which leader's mission to support, which gives that person an edge in their internal power struggle. Such choices play a role throughout the storyline, and the game's ultimate outcome hinges on your decisions.

The game offers a wide range of missions. The most complex are woven into the storyline and involve the struggle against Min and his cronies, the tensions within the Golden Path and Ajay's efforts to learn about his parents. They lead to interactions with Min's top lieutenants, a crusty CIA agent and a pair of disreputable British stoners — the guys who are eager to test their mystery chemicals on you. There are also some mystical trips to Shangri-La, where you'll fight demons with the help of a tiger. These missions are generally well constructed and quite entertaining, though a few get a bit tedious and others are a bit weird.

The game also offers an incredible number of side quests. In addition to capturing outposts and large fortresses, you can take quick assignments to deliver cargo, free hostages, hunt animals and fight against waves of attackers in an arena.

Although there are many different kinds of activities, they can feel a bit repetitive if you don't mix them up and throw in some missions from the storyline.

Throughout all of this, the core of the game remains

fighting bad guys. Min's thugs range from regular soldiers to armor-clad commandos to Molotov-wielding crazies to super stealthy hunters. In combination, they represent a challenging force. You quickly learn that a sneak attack is usually the best option. Openly assaulting anything more than a small patrol can prove deadly.

Min's goons aren't Kyrat's only dangerous creatures. Wolves, bears, tigers and honey badgers pop up to present problems — and opportunities. While you will have to tangle with a few wild critters, you can also turn them into temporary allies. If you see a human enemy happen to have some meat in your backpack, you can toss the bait toward your foe and attract a predator to his location. Some of the wild animals can easily take out two or three of Min's minions and improve your odds in a firefight.

This fall has brought an abundance of good open-world games. While the Himalayan adventure in "Far Cry 4" might not be perched on the peak, it's definitely worth a visit.

**Bottom line:** A- "Far Cry 4" delivers exciting action in an incredibly beautiful location.

**Platforms:** Xbox One, Xbox 360, PlayStation 4, PS3, PC

**Rating:** The game earns its mature rating for violence, blood, drug use, profanity and a few topless women.

**Online:** far-cry.ubi.com



## DAVE BARRY HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

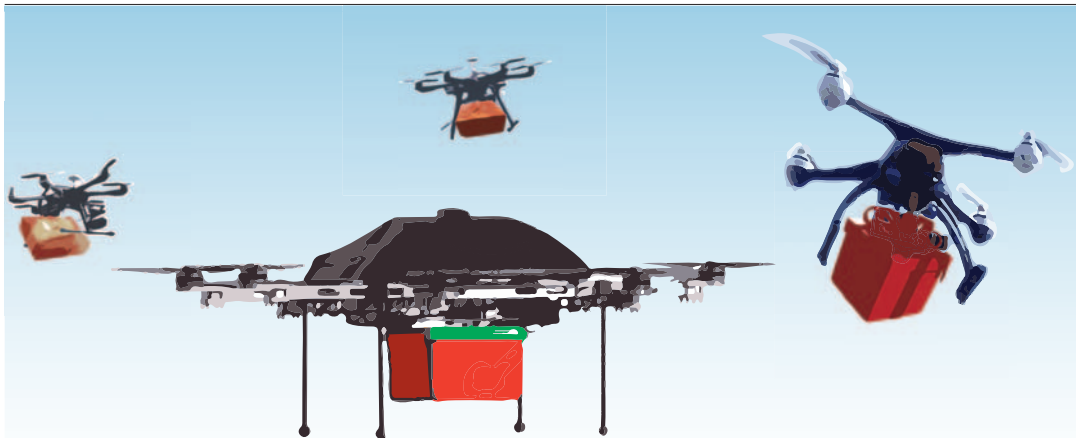


ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPHER SIX/Stars and Stripes

## HERE COMES THE CRAP

Once again, Dave Barry offers the gift of laughter, not good ideas

By DAVE BARRY  
McClatchy Newspapers

**T**he holidays are a super-busy time of year, and it's too easy, with all the hustle and bustle, to forget about what this season is really all about. So we will remind you: It's about purchasing high-tech consumer devices at retail.

This is a tradition that dates back to the Nativity, as we can see in this dialogue among the Three Kings, taken verbatim from the Bible:

**FIRST KING:** OK, we just have to follow that star, and it will guide us.

**SECOND KING:** Really? That seems kind of vague.

**THIRD KING:** Why don't I get directions from this new technological device I bought at retail?

**FIRST KING:** What is it?

**THIRD KING:** It's a primitive GPS, powered by olive oil.

**SECOND KING:** What does "GPS" stand for?

**THIRD KING:** I have no idea. But it has turn-by-turn directions! Listen.

**GPS:** Turn left at the Sphinx.

**FIRST KING:** The Sphinx?

**SECOND KING:** Apparently it thinks we're in Egypt.

**FIRST KING:** OK, like I said, we follow the star.

**THIRD KING:** I'm glad I bought the service agreement.

We have come a long way since those primitive times, but the basic idea hasn't changed: The holiday season, we throng to the malls and purchase the absolute latest high-tech items, defined as "items that will be technologically obsolete by Valentine's Day."

Perhaps you're thinking, "But my kids already have every kind of gadget! What else can I possibly buy them, especially if they are boys and therefore likely to use any technology they get hold of for evil purposes?"

How about a drone? That's right: Drones are no longer just military devices used by the government to

conduct foreign policy in the form of vaporizing selected foreigners. Today, relatively inexpensive consumer drones are sold everywhere, and they've become more and more popular.

Recently, I was with some friends enjoying a quiet lunch next to a peaceful pond, when suddenly there was this buzzing sound, and we looked up and saw, flying above us, a consumer drone, which we determined was being controlled by a young man in the distance. He was quite skillful, able to make the drone swoop all around us and hover over us, buzz, buzz, buzz. Haha! Watching this miraculous

little machine dance around the sky under the masterful control of the clever youngster, my friends and I all had the same fanciful thought: I wish I had a shotgun.

For the drone, of course.

But what if you want to go "old school"? What if instead of giving your loved ones high-tech devices that will, in time, become obsolete and useless, you'd prefer to give gifts that are already useless?

In that case, you've come to the right place: our annual Holiday Gift Guide, which has been a beloved American holiday tradition dating back to the dawn of time. Each year, we scour the entire solar system, looking for unique and tasteful gift ideas. Each year, we fail utterly and wind up with a collection of random crap we found on the Internet. This is our holiday gift to you.

As always, we guarantee that the items in this guide are real products you can actually buy if there is something seriously wrong with you. We further guarantee that each of these items has been subjected to our rigorous Holiday Gift Guide Quality Testing Program, under which we remove the item from its packaging and expose it directly to light so that Bob the Photographer can take a picture of it. Then we put it back in its packaging and, ideally, never interact with it again.

Sound enticing? You bet it does! So let's "cut to the chase" and take a look at the items that "made the cut" for the 2014 Holiday Gift Guide.



THE DETROIT FREE PRESS/TNS

# DAVE BARRY HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



Never worry about going to a dark bathroom at night again with the **Night Glow Toilet Seat**.

## Night Glow toilet seat

*\$50 plus shipping and handling from nightglow-seats.com*

— Suggested by Bill Hudgins of Gallatin, Tenn.

Don't you hate going into a dark bathroom at night? You stumble around blindly, feeling for the light switch, and then, when you finally turn the light on, it's way too bright. And then you notice that both the toilet and bathtub are missing. And then you realize you're actually in a closet.

At least that's what happens to us. But it won't ever happen to you or some lucky person on your holiday gift list if you buy this glow-in-the-dark toilet seat. It gives off an eerie greenish or bluish light all night long, thanks to a well-known scientific phenomenon that we do not personally understand, although we're hoping it isn't atomic radiation.

This thing is amazingly bright. If your electrical power went out, you could actually use it as a flashlight, provided you wouldn't mind walking around holding a toilet seat, which could be embarrassing.

Although not as embarrassing as going to the bathroom in a dark closet. Not that we have ever done that.



PHOTOS BY BOB EIGHMIE, THE MIAMI HERALD/TNS

The **Ostrich Pillow** is perfect for anyone who could use a good power nap, which surely includes Santa.

## Ostrich pillow

*\$99 (price may vary) plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

— Suggested by Frances Biegler of Houston; Mary Wilson of Washington, D.C.; Russ Thomas of Greenfield, Mass.; Cindy Loosterman of Shelby, N.C.; Rolf Phillips of Key West, Fla.; Judi Smith of Miami; Rory Clarke of Coral Gables, Fla.

This is the perfect gift for the busy executive or airline pilot on your holiday gift list who needs to "get away from it all" by power-napping for brief periods, although preferably not during takeoff or landing.

## Merman Christmas tree ornament

*\$29.99 plus shipping and handling from diamondsforthesea.com*

— Suggested by Elaine Ziman of Erie, Colo.

Christmas is a time of tradition, and there is no Christmas tradition more hallowed than merman tree ornaments. These have been part of the holidays for centuries, as expressed in the lyrics to this traditional English Christmas carol:

Oh bring us a figgy pudding  
Oh bring us a figgy pudding  
Oh bring us a figgy pudding  
And a merman figurine!

These figurines depict ripped muscular six-pack-flaunting fish-tailed mermen, costumed and accessorized and glittered to represent various professions and lifestyles.

We purchased a doctor merman; other options (there are dozens) include cowboy, soldier, police officer, firefighter, rock star, vampire and leprechaun.

These will add a festive touch to any tree. Or, at your Christmas party, you can hang one over a doorway and watch as your guests notice it and, in accordance with ancient tradition, exclaim, "What the hell is THAT?"



ORIGINAL COYOTE PHOTO COURTESY MIA McPHERSON

Coyote urine, with infinite uses, is a gift sure to make an impression.

## Coyote urine

*\$8.99 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

If you're looking to give a unique gift that will definitely "make an impression," consider coyote urine. It comes in a convenient bottle, and it has countless uses. For example, you can sprinkle some on the ground around your house or garden, and small pests, thinking that a coyote has recently urinated there, will avoid the area.

On the other hand, the urine might actually attract coyotes, not to mention larger animals

such as wolves and bears that are interested in eating coyotes. So you could wind up having a very exciting yard. And that's only one of the uses of coyote urine. We frankly don't know what the other ones are.

Maybe if you got called in by the IRS for an audit, you could sprinkle it on your tax records, and maybe that would scare off the auditor. There's only one way to find out.

We don't know how they collect the urine from the coyotes. But that could explain why they're always howling.

## Spotted Dick

*\$8.10 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

It's well known that the finest food in the world is English. Every day, millions of people eat it on purpose. And one of the most famous of all English dishes is Spotted Dick, which is a



kind of pudding that you can buy in a can.

We think it should replace fruitcake as a traditional treat that people give to other people during the holiday season but would never dream of actually eating themselves. Why not get in on this tradition at the beginning?

## Selfie toaster

*\$75 from burntimpressions.com*

— Suggested by Laura Barry of New York City

If you're like many people, you enjoy taking selfies of yourself every few minutes and sending these via social media to all your friends, who are likewise sending selfies to you and everyone else they know, so that as a group you're spending 70 percent of your waking hours either producing or looking at images of each other grinning like idiots, not that we're being judgmental.

But perhaps you're getting tired of the plain-vanilla selfies. Perhaps you're wondering, "Isn't there some other medium I can use to capture images of myself?" Yes, there is. And that medium is toast. We're talking about a historic breakthrough

in toaster technology. The way it works is, you supply an image to the toaster company, and they send you a toaster that will burn that image into every piece of toast it produces.

We used an image of former Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, because we love him very much and want to elect him president of the United States regardless of what the so-called "Constitution" says. But you can use an image of yourself or a loved one.

You can also get a toaster that produces three-line text messages on toast, which, as you can imagine, is a powerful communication tool, unless you smear cream cheese over it.

This year, give the gift that says: "I was really desperate for a gift." Give the gift of personalized toast.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18





# DAVE BARRY HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

FROM PAGE 17



**Ladybugs will soon replace cats and dogs as household pets, and you can get a jump start with a tub of 1,500 ladybugs just like this one, only much smaller.**

## Tubful of ladybugs

*\$9.50 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

Do you have a youngster on your holiday list who wants a pet? Then just imagine the child of joy and surprise on that life's day when he or she receives this plastic tub containing approximately 1,500 live ladybugs. Gardeners use these because ladybugs eat insect pests, but they also make wonderful pets — obedient, intelligent and fiercely loyal. More than one tragedy has been averted when a sleeping family was awakened in the middle of the night by an agitated ladybug that sensed impending danger. Granted, this danger usually involved aphids, but still.

And the real beauty of giving ladybugs to children as pets is that if, God forbid, the child should step on his or her beloved ladybug companion, the child will still have a tub containing approximately 1,499 more ladybugs. It's a Tub of Love.

## Facelift bra

*\$30 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com (search for "Facial Lifting Bra")*

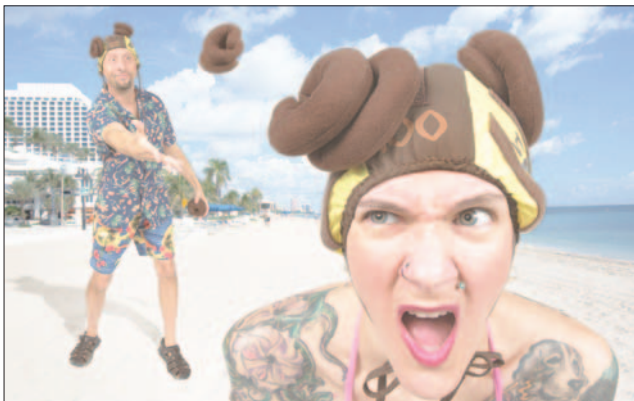
— Suggested by Joe Hicks of Kyushu, Japan

This product — another scientific beauty advance from Japan



is a brassiere that you wear on your head. If we understand it correctly, it pulls your cheeks sideways, thereby eliminating those lines on the side of your nose and mouth that make you look like the old witch who gave the apple to Snow White. Of course, it seems to us that when you take the face bra off, the lines would come right back.

But what do we know? We're just a gift guide. And that's why we recommend this product as the perfect way to send the festive holiday message: "You're looking old."



## Doody Head game

*\$17.91 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

— Suggested by Sue Eckhardt of Gatesville, Texas

Here's a great gift for anybody on your list who enjoys competitive sports. To play Doody Head, you and your opponent strap on stylish yet functional Velcro caps, then fling Velcro doodies at each other in an effort to make them stick to the opponent's head.

It is hilarious fun for literally seconds on end. Then it gets old. But those are some memorable seconds.

**Tired of the same old competitive sports? Try the Doody Head game.**

PHOTOS BY ROB EIGHMIE, MIAMI HERALD/TNS

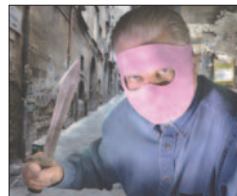
## Anti-aging sauna face mask

*\$59.99 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

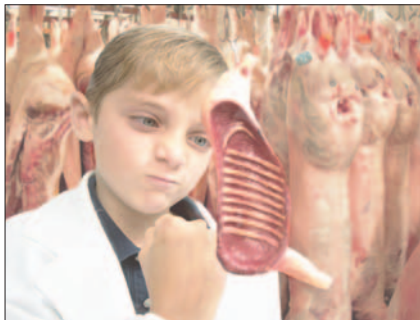
— Suggested by Janice Gelb of Melbourne, Australia

Have you ever noticed how youthful people look in a sauna? Neither have we. People in saunas usually look like they're about to die. Allegedly, however, saunas make your skin more youthful and beautiful. That's the thinking

behind this scientific product, which comes from Japan, so you know it's not just some kind of insane dad. The idea is, instead of sitting in a small, hideously hot room with naked Scandinavians, you simply strap on your sauna face mask, and almost immediately, thanks to science, you'll look like Hannibal Lecter. It's the perfect gift for anyone who's interested in healthy skin and robbing convenience stores.



**Instead of sitting in a hideously hot and cramped sauna, you can simply strap on this anti-aging Sauna Face Mask.**



**What do you get the "Rocky" fan who has it all? There's "The Meat," part of a series of "Rocky"-themed action figures from the '70s.**

## 'Rocky' action figure: The Meat

*\$29.95 plus shipping and handling from www.amazon.com*

— Suggested by Jon Harris of Christiansburg, Va.

Do you have a collector on your holiday gift list who's a fan of the estimated 47 Rocky movies starring Sylvester Stallone as a plucky boxer with the heart of a lion and the IQ of oatmeal? If so, we have the perfect gift item for you.

This item is part of a series of Rocky-themed action figures that came out in the '70s. Most of the figures depict human beings — Rocky, for example — but this one is different. This is a plastic replica of a side of beef. Really. It's called, simply, "The

Meat." It's inspired by the scene in the meat locker where Rocky punches and eventually defeats a large hanging sector of dead cow. Laugh if you want, but Cracked.com ranked The Meat at No. 21 on its list of the 36 Worst Action Figures.

We got ours on the Internet. The package is a little beat up, but The Meat itself looks as good as it ever did. It's accessorized by a miniature bloodstained butcher coat like the one worn by Rocky's friend Paulie.

Apparently you can put that on the Paulie action figure, which is also available on the Internet, but at a lower price than The Meat. That has to hurt.

## Acupuncture pig model

*\$35 plus shipping and handling from www.amazon.com*

A complaint we frequently hear is: "I would like to perform acupuncture on a pig, but I don't know where the darned acupuncture points are!" If that sounds like somebody you know, then we have the ideal gift for that person. This is a plastic model of a pig, with one side looking like a nor-

mal pigskin-covered pig, and the other side looking like a demon zombie pig whose internal organs are on display. It's intended for use as a training aid in veterinary acupuncture, which is a real thing that we are not making up. It might sound ridiculous, but

this ancient art can do wonderful things to ease the suffering of an ailing animal and restore it to health. Then you can eat it.



## Black toilet paper

*\$36.99 plus shipping and handling from amazon.com*

Why would you give somebody black toilet paper? To answer that question, let's quote the Amazon Product Description: "Black toilet paper will make a statement in any bathroom."

Ask yourself: Do you know anybody who would NOT want to make a statement in the bathroom? Neither do we! That's why we think you should give black toilet paper to everybody on your holiday list. It's that very special kind of gift that makes everyone say, "I can't tell whether this has been used."



**Black toilet paper, perfect for making a statement in your bathroom. We're just not sure what that statement is.**

Dave Barry is a humor columnist for the Miami Herald. Write to him c/o Miami Herald, One Herald Plaza, Miami, FL 33132.

## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Rick Ross offers healthy living tips

## Rapper credits CrossFit workouts and diet for 100-pound weight loss

By JONATHAN LANDRUM JR.  
The Associated Press

**R**ick Ross had two seizures in a single day, sending him to the hospital three years ago. Health didn't concern the 300-pound rapper then, but he's shed nearly 100 pounds in the past seven months by eating healthier foods and embracing a high-intensity workout plan.

Ross, 37, says he continues to work long hours creating music, including his seventh album, "Hood Billionaire," released last month. It's the second album Ross has put out this year after the March release of "Mastermind," which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 albums chart.

But in the middle of making music and running his Maybach Music Group record label, Ross has made his health a main priority.

And now, he believes if he can drop pounds, you can, too. In an interview with The Associated Press, the Grammy-nominated rap star offered tips on how to lose weight.

### No soda on the side

Ross has given up a few things since changing his lifestyle.

First, the rapper stopped drinking soda, unless it's diet. He also said it's better to eat heavier meals earlier in the day. As a result, he said he's able to burn calories faster.

"I used to eat big meals at 2 a.m. and base it on my schedule," he said. "But I don't do that no more."

Ross said you should drink water throughout the day. He also said to treat yourself when you work hard.

"I just went to Prime 112 (in Miami) the other night, and I had some fried Oreos and fried velvet cake," he said. "I treated myself.

You wake up in the morning, you might regret it. But you got to get back to work."

### Every day he's hustling

Ross credits a CrossFit program introduced to him by Reebok last year — calling it "Ross Fit" — with helping him lose weight.

It's a highly active workout plan where Ross completes a series of exercises within a 20-minute span, including pumps and Olympic-style weightlifting.

"CrossFit overall is more of an intense workout," he said. "So instead of doing 20 minutes on the treadmill, you'll (do) a 20-minute gym workout and you'll be not only building your endurance,

but also muscle simultaneously."

Ross said the number of people who work out with him has grown from four to 20, including hit-maker DJ Khaled and producer E-40.

Enduring a tough workout isn't foreign to Ross, who played offensive line at Albany State University in Georgia.



Rapper Rick Ross has lost nearly 100 pounds in the past seven months through healthy eating and high-intensity exercise including CrossFit workouts.

VICTORIA WILL, INVISION/AP

### Winning with wings

Ross stopped eating certain foods such as bread, white rice and fish fillets, and began drinking less alcohol. But he hasn't eliminated one of his favorite foods: lemon pepper wings.

The rapper, who owns nine Wingstop franchises around the country, said he stops by the

restaurant at least twice a week when he's in town. He's trying to keep a good balance, though, by eating foods like branzino and fruits such as pears.

"I'm not under no stress of what I'm eating," he said. "There are no restrictions. I'm not trying to make a particular weight. I'm just working out and doing what's best for Rozay."



# Exercises to develop broad shoulders

By EDDIE ALVAREZ  
Miami Herald

**W**hat's the best exercise to build broad shoulders?

Few muscle groups impact your strength and appearance the way broad shoulders do. Your deltoids, or shoulder muscles, are used in most pushing movements, making them an important muscle for upper body strength. For men, broad shoulders project an image of strength and masculinity. For a woman, broad shoulders make the waist and hips appear smaller.

There are three main muscles in the

shoulders: anterior deltoid (the front part of your shoulders), medial deltoid (the middle part of your shoulders) and posterior deltoid (the back part of your shoulders). Just like on any muscle, you need to use low weight and high repetitions to build a base of strength, then over time add weight to make the shoulders grow bigger, wider, broader and stronger.

Best exercise for shoulders? The overhead press is a classic compound movement and it effectively targets all three shoulder muscles. Overhead presses can be done with a barbell or dumbbells. While the overhead press can be performed standing or seated, standing is generally

easier on your back because you can use your legs as natural shock absorbers.

Start by holding the weight at about shoulder height, with your elbows directly under your hands. Push the weight overhead until it is at arm's length. Fully extend your arms, but don't hold your elbows locked out.

Repeat the movement for three sets of 10 repetitions, adding a little weight as you feel comfortable.

Other good exercises for shoulders: side lateral raises to focus on the medial deltoids and rear dumbbell raises to focus on the posterior deltoids.

The overhead press — which can be done with a barbell or dumbbells — effectively targets the three main muscles in the shoulders.

FOTOLIA/TNS

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where you can stand out?*

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# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## US adds 321K jobs, most in 3 years

By Christopher S. Rugaber  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON—U.S. employers added 321,000 jobs in November, the biggest burst of hiring in nearly three years and the latest sign that the United States is outperforming other economies throughout the developed world.

The Labor Department also said Friday that 44,000 more jobs were added in September and October combined than the government previously had estimated. Job gains have averaged 241,000 per month this year, putting 2014 on track to be the strongest year for hiring since 1999.

The unemployment rate remained at a six-year low of 5.8 percent last month.

The robust job gains come after the economy expanded from April through September at its fastest pace in 11 years. The additional jobs are expected to help boost growth in coming months.

Still, the healthy hiring levels

have yet to boost most Americans' paychecks significantly.

The improving U.S. job market contrasts with weakness elsewhere around the globe. Growth among the 18 European nations in the euro alliance is barely positive, and the eurozone's unemployment rate is 11.5 percent. Japan is in recession.

China's growth has slowed as it seeks to rein in excessive lending tied to real estate development. Other large developing countries, including Russia and Brazil, are also straining to grow.

Most economists say the United States likely will continue to strengthen despite the sluggishness overseas. The U.S. economy is much less dependent on exports than are Germany, China and Japan. U.S. growth is fueled more by its large domestic market and free-spending consumers, who account for about 70 percent of the economy.

That trend helps support the steady U.S. job growth. Most of

the industries that have enjoyed the strongest job gains depend on the U.S. market rather than on overseas demand. Retailers, restaurants and hotels, and education and health care, for example, have been among the most consistent sources of healthy hiring since the recession officially ended in 2009.

Manufacturing, which is more exposed to overseas ups and downs, has added jobs for most of the recovery but in smaller numbers. That is a likely reason why pay growth has been tepid since the recession ended. Companies and industries that are more exposed to international competition typically pay higher salaries.

Temporary hiring for the winter holidays may be providing a boost, though it isn't clear how much occurred last month and how much in December. Shipping companies have announced ambitious plans to up U.S. sales it expects to add up to 95,000 seasonal workers, up from 85,000 last year. FedEx plans to hire 50,000, up

from 40,000.

The National Retail Federation estimates that seasonal retail hiring could grow about 4 percent to as high as 800,000.

Most recent figures on the economy have been encouraging. Americans are buying more cars, which will likely keep factories busy in coming months. Auto sales last month rose to their second-fastest pace this year. Car sales are on track to rise 6 percent this year for 2013.

### MARKET WATCH

Dec. 4, 2014

Dow Jones Industrials	-12.52
Nasdaq composite	-5.04
Standard & Poor's 500	-2.41
Russell 2000	-6.00
	1,173.01

### EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Dec. 6)	\$1.2674
Dollar buys (Dec. 6)	€0.7890
British pound (Dec. 6)	\$1.61
Japanese yen (Dec. 6)	¥117.00
South Korean won (Dec. 6)	₩1,084.00

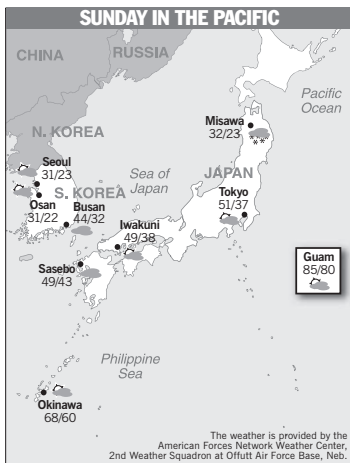
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771
British pound	\$1.5640/6.394
Canada (dollar)	1.1422
China (Yuan)	6.1502
Denmark (Krone)	6.9554
Egypt (Pound)	7.5101
Euro	\$1.2300/0.8130
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7512
Hungary (Forint)	250.28
Israel (Shekel)	3.7375
Japan (Yen)	3.7534
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2920
Norway (Krone)	7.1639
Philippines (Peso)	44.53
Poland (Zloty)	3.39
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7534
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3213
South Korea (Won)	1,119.19
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9778
Thailand (Baht)	32.89
Turkey (New Lira)	2,400

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

### INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
3-month bill	3.25
Federal funds market rate	0.12
3-month bill	0.03
30-year bond	2.94

## WEATHER OUTLOOK



### Saturday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Ablene, Tex	58	41	Cld	Chatanooga	62	40	Rain	Fort Wayne	39	25	Cldy	Louisville	58	34	Rain	Pocatello	49	35	Cldy
Akron, Ohio	41	25	Rain	Cheyenne	50	32	Cldy	Fresno	67	48	Cldy	Lubbock	56	39	PCldy	Portland, Maine	40	29	Rain
Albany, N.Y.	43	29	Rain	Chicago	38	26	Cldy	Goodland	49	29	Cldy	Macon	75	47	Cldy	Portland, Ore.	48	34	PCldy
Albuquerque	57	35	Cldy	Cincinnati	49	30	Rain	Grand Junction	45	30	Cldy	Madison	32	20	PCldy	Providence	53	37	Rain
Allentown, Pa.	50	32	Rain	Cleveland	40	25	Rain	Great Falls	46	35	Cldy	Medford	54	40	PCldy	Pueblo	40	27	Cldy
Amesbury	43	30	PCldy	Colorado Springs	48	32	Cldy	Green Bay	42	28	Rain	Memphis	55	40	Cldy	Raleigh-Durham	58	42	PCldy
Anchorage	30	27	Cldy	Columbia, S.C.	67	47	Rain	Greensboro, N.C.	52	42	Rain	Midland-Odessa	59	39	PCldy	Rejo City	49	35	PCldy
Asheville	58	36	Rain	Columbus, Ga.	74	46	Cldy	Harrisburg	46	35	Rain	Milwaukee	35	25	Cldy	Reno	55	39	PCldy
Atlanta	67	44	Rain	Columbus, Ohio	45	29	Rain	Hartford-Spfd	40	29	Cldy	Mpls-St Paul	26	18	Cldy	Rochester	55	40	Rain
Atlantic City	59	41	Rain	Concord, N.H.	75	59	Cldy	Helena	40	29	Cldy	Missoula	37	30	Rain	Rochester	38	24	Rain
Austin	67	44	PCldy	Corpus Christi	62	45	Cldy	Honolulu	83	67	Cldy	Monterey	76	45	Cldy	St. Louis	54	42	PCldy
Baltimore	53	39	Rain	Dallas-Ft Worth	62	45	Cldy	Houston	73	55	Cldy	San Francisco	65	54	Cldy	Salt Lake City	51	35	Cldy
Baton Rouge	76	51	Cldy	Dayton	43	28	Rain	Huntsville	62	40	Rain	New Orleans	76	55	Cldy	St. Petersburg	77	64	PCldy
Bilings	48	30	Cldy	Denver	78	61	PCldy	Indianapolis	62	40	Cldy	New York City	53	36	Rain	St. Thomas	86	76	PCldy
Birmingham	68	43	PCldy	Des Moines	48	32	Cldy	Jacksonville	71	41	Cldy	Newark	54	36	Rain	St. Thomas	86	76	PCldy
Bismarck	36	20	PCldy	Detroit	39	27	Cldy	Jacksonville	75	55	Cldy	Norfolk-Va.	61	46	Rain	Wilmington, Del.	55	40	PCldy
Boise	48	34	Rain	Duluth	37	25	Cldy	Juneau	38	32	Rain	North Lake City	53	36	PCldy	Wilmington, N.C.	55	40	PCldy
Boston	50	35	Rain	El Paso	65	45	Cldy	Kansas City	41	30	Cldy	North Platte	45	27	PCldy	Wichita Falls	55	40	PCldy
Bridgeport	53	35	Rain	Elkins	55	37	Rain	Key West	70	50	PCldy	Oklahoma City	51	38	Cldy	Wichita Falls	55	40	PCldy
Brownsville	79	62	Cldy	Erie	40	26	Rain	Knoxville	60	39	Rain	Omaha	37	28	Cldy	Wichita Falls	55	40	PCldy
Buffalo	38	23	Rain	Eugene	53	36	Cldy	Lake Charles	73	51	Cldy	Orlando	79	61	Cldy	Wilmington, Del.	55	40	PCldy
Burlington, Vt.	40	18	Snow	Evansville	47	33	Cldy	Lansing	49	35	Cldy	Paducah	49	35	Cldy	Yakima	42	30	Cldy
Caribou, Maine	32	7	Snow	Fairbanks	1	-6	Cir	Las Vegas	66	49	PCldy	Pendleton	47	35	Cldy	Yakima	42	30	Cldy
Casper, Wyo.	49	32	Cldy	Fargo	24	18	PCldy	Lexington	58	33	Rain	Perth	39	29	PCldy	Yakima	42	30	Cldy
Charleston, S.C.	71	51	Cldy	Flagstaff	49	27	Cldy	Lincoln	39	28	Cir	Philadelphia	56	40	Rain	Yakima	42	30	Cldy
Charleston, W.Va.	51	31	Rain	Ft Smith	37	22	Cldy	Little Rock	58	39	PCldy	Phoenix	74	54	Cldy	Yakima	42	30	Cldy
Charlotte, N.C.	59	44	Rain				Los Angeles	70	56	PCldy	Pittsburgh	47	29	Rain	Yakima	42	30	Cldy	

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

### National temperature extremes

Hi: Thru, 84, Naples, Fla. and Punta Gorda, Fla.	
Lo: Thru, -14, Wakefield, Mich.	

# INDEPENDENT NEWS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY

## Whenever They Fight and Wherever They Live

The first Stars and Stripes was printed during the Civil War, when a band of Union soldiers published a handful of editions.

During World War I, Stars and Stripes reappeared in Paris on February 8, 1918, to serve the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), by order of General of the Armies John J. Pershing. An all-military staff produced it weekly until the war's end.

A second renaissance began on April 18, 1942, when a small group of servicemen began publishing a four-page weekly Stars and Stripes in London. They sold each copy for "tuppence" (about 5 cents) and in no time doubled their page count to eight pages, printing daily instead of weekly.

The first World War II edition of Stars and Stripes featured an interview with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. Marshall quoted Gen. Pershing, World War I Commander of the AEF, who described Stars as a major factor in sustaining morale. Stars and Stripes later found a champion and protector in Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander and later president of the United States.

Eisenhower enforced a hands-off policy in regard to Stars and Stripes that continues to the present day.

Operations expanded, following GIs to the battlefield to bring them the news. During the war, Stars and Stripes published over 30

separate editions, running up to 24 pages per issue.

At one time, Stars and Stripes had some 25 printing locations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. The Pacific edition was launched a week after VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945).

The war ended—but Stars and Stripes kept going. Its reporters and photographers continued to join American troops in the field, throughout the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, during the 1990s Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the 2003 outset of Operation Enduring Freedom, Stars and Stripes was there to report first-hand. The war in Afghanistan continues to receive steady coverage. And during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stars reporters embedded with military units in Kuwait and Iraq, as well as on Navy ships in the region.

Stars and Stripes today is a multimedia news organization. The majority of Stars and Stripes unique reporting efforts is read now in digital form, either online at [stripes.com](http://stripes.com) or via mobile offerings for iPhone, Android and iPad, in over 200 countries around the world.

The print newspaper is still available for servicemembers, government civilians and their families in

Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific—and in contingency areas. Washington, D.C., hosts the Central office, where daily editions are transmitted to printers in Afghanistan, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Djibouti, as well as in Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, and South Korea. Stars and Stripes also publishes several weeklies (Stripes Guam, Japan, Korea and Okinawa), designed to serve the

needs of their respective military communities.

A U.S. edition comprised exclusively of Stars and Stripes reports from around the world now serves stateside forces and veterans. The U.S. edition is published in partnership with commercial newspaper publishers who serve communities with large military populations.



## STARS AND STRIPES RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

2014 VFW News Media Award – For outstanding contribution to a better understanding of our American way of life and its institutions and interests by honest and forthright reporting.

2013 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Notable Narrative Winner  
Recipient: Laura Rauch

2013 Best American Newspaper Narrative Writing Contest – Notable Narrative Winner  
Recipient: Martin Kuz: "Soldiers Recount Attack"

2013 National Headline Awards – Second Place: News Series (Forever After: A Warrior Wounded; A Family Challenged)

2013 min Best of Web: Redesign – Honorable Mention  
Stripes UK website

2011 Military Photographer of the Year – Honorable Mention  
Recipient: Joshua DeMott

2011 Sigma Delta Chi Award – Breaking News Photography (Newspaper Circulation 100,001+ or Affiliated Website/National Magazine) Recipient: Laura Rauch: "For those I love I will sacrifice"

2011 John Reagan "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism – Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

2010 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipient: Jon Rabinoff

2010 National Headliner Awards – First Place: Public Service (Forcing Change) – Third Place: News Series (Coming Home: The Men of Triple Deuce)

2009 George Polk Awards in Journalism – George Polk Award for Military Reporting  
Recipients: Charlie Reed, Leo Shane III and Kevin Barton

2009 min Editorial & Design Awards – Editorial Print / Special Supplement: HEROES 2009; Custom Publication Design: Stripes GAMER

2007 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipient: Monte Morin

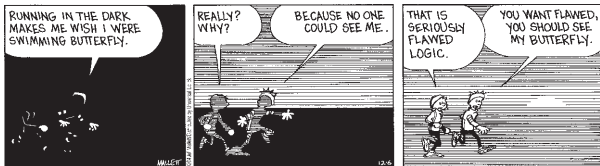
2006 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipients: Monte Morin, Joe Giordano; Honorable mention: Nancy Montgomery Photography; Fred Zimmerman

2005 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipients: Steve Lewis Photography; Terry Boyd

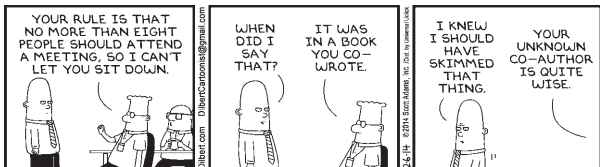
2004 American Legion Excellence in Journalism Award – Ground Truth Series

2003 Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Award – First Amendment, Finalist

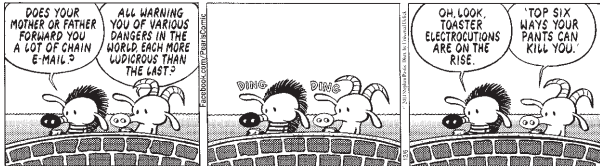
Frazz



Dilbert



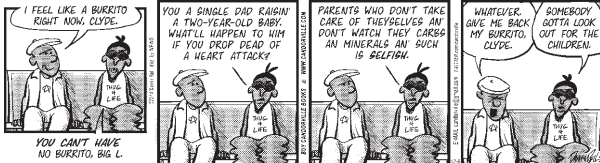
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



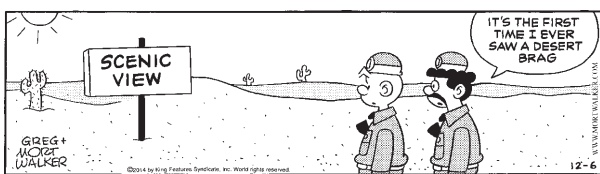
Candorville



Get Fuzzy



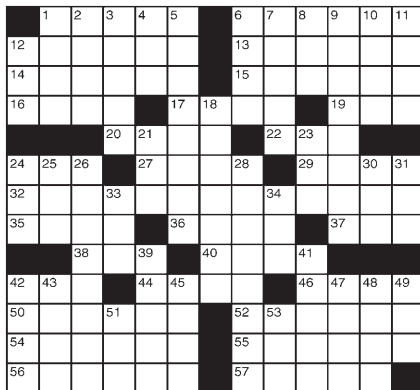
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



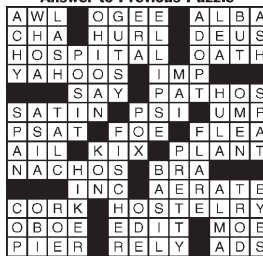
### ACROSS

- 1 Stereo adjustment knob
- 6 Suffocate
- 12 Environment
- 13 Stocking seller
- 14 Aft
- 15 Expiates
- 16 Unscorted
- 17 Unaltered
- 19 — out a living
- 20 Minnesota's St. — College
- 22 Perched
- 24 Cpl.'s subordinate
- 27 On
- 29 Mentor
- 32 Revolutionary War figure
- 35 Antitoxins
- 36 Primary couleur
- 37 Storm center
- 38 Little devil
- 40 Four-letter word
- 42 Chances, for short
- 44 Lummoxes
- 46 Approximately
- 50 Kibitz, maybe
- 52 "The Handmaid's Tale" author
- 54 East
- 55 Small Lump
- 56 Votes for
- 57 Tinkered (with)

### DOWN

- 1 Clenched hand
- 2 Neighbor of Sask.
- 3 Painter Velazquez
- 4 Always, in verse
- 5 Puts off payment
- 6 Counterfeit
- 7 Carries
- 8 Equip-ment
- 9 Tweak
- 10 Onion's kin
- 11 Gaelic
- 12 More, to Manuela
- 18 In conflict with
- 21 Once around
- 23 Past
- 24 Sleepwear, briefly
- 25 Enemy
- 26 Poirot creator
- 28 Nice
- 30 Mexican monarch
- 31 Work with
- 33 "Platoon" venue
- 34 Protrude
- 39 Essential meaning
- 41 Cowpoke's greeting
- 42 Bassoon relative
- 43 Knitting stitch
- 45 Picnic invaders
- 47 Dissolute fellow
- 48 Auctioneer's cry
- 49 Laudatory writing
- 51 Gumshoe
- 53 As well

### Answer to Previous Puzzle



### 12-6

### CRYPTOQUIP

NJDFN ALPYNNJP FMBHA F

SYJWJ BE XBEA WLJXJ JFAJK

MV F LHDJ-MYNNJC MYPC:

"ALJ SJNYWFK MPYJ."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: LOVER OF CLEOPATRA WHO PRIDED HIMSELF IN KNOWING EVERY OPPOSITE-MEANING WORD: MARK ANTONYM.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals B





## MLB/SPORTS BRIEFS

# It's official: Cruz, Mariners finalize deal

By Tim Booth  
The Associated Press



TED S. WARREN/AP

The Mariners' Nelson Cruz smiles as he talks to reporters after being introduced at a news conference on Thursday in Seattle. The Mariners finalized a four-year, \$57-million contract with Cruz, a free agent after leading the majors in home runs last season with the Baltimore Orioles, on Thursday.

SEATTLE — Had things come together last season, Nelson Cruz's introduction with the Seattle Mariners would have taken place a year ago.

Seattle pursued Cruz last year but when it didn't work out, he went on to lead the majors in home runs playing on a one-year deal in Baltimore. The Mariners were quick to try to find a deal that would work for both sides as soon as this offseason arrived.

"We were open and honest as we could possibly be and say, 'This is the guy that we want,'" Seattle general manager Jack Zduriencik said Thursday. "He was the guy we wanted to bring into this organization and it just came together."

Seattle landed the right-handed power bat that was a priority this offseason with a \$57 million, four-year contract that was finalized Thursday. He gets a \$1 million signing bonus payable by Dec. 31 and yearly salaries of \$14 million.

Cruz parlayed an \$8 million, one-year contract with Baltimore into a long deal with the Mariners after hitting 40 homers and driving in 108 runs for the Orioles. Zduriencik said adding a fourth year to the contract — which will take Cruz to age 38 — was critical to getting the deal done.

"With Nelson, the fact that because he's such a power guy, and in our game today it's so difficult to find," Zduriencik said. "In our league he can be a DH which will preserve him somewhat, he's in great shape, he's a really good worker. He may age very well. We had to do that to get him here and we did it."

Cruz served a 50-game suspension in 2013 for violations of the major league drug agreement in relation to the sport's investigation of the Biogenesis of America clinic. He again referred Thursday to making a mistake taking banned substances and said he's moved on from the suspension.

## Briefly

# Bowe, Mancini head HoF class

The Associated Press

CANASTOTA, N.Y. — Riddick Bowe, who beat undisputed champion Evander Holyfield to win the heavyweight boxing title in 1992, and popular lightweight champion Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini have been selected for induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

Also selected were featherweight champion "Prince" Naseem Hamed, light flyweight champion Yoko Gushiken, manager Rafael Mendoza, referee Steve Smoger, journalist Nigel Collins and broadcaster Jim Lampley.

Posthumous honorees include Masao Ohba, Ken Overlin and publicist John F.X. Condon.

The induction ceremony is scheduled for June 14, 2015 at the Hall of Fame in upstate New York.

## Pelicans sign F Dante Cunningham

The New Orleans Pelicans have signed forward Dante Cunningham, who has struggled to clear his name after domestic assault charges against him were dropped this summer.

Cunningham was charged last April with felony domestic assault after his former girlfriend accused him of choking her and slamming her head against a wall. The charge was dropped in August after an investigation uncovered inconsistencies in the woman's story.

Many teams remained reluctant to sign Cunningham in the wake of the Ray Rice scandal that rocked the NFL.

## Earnhardt Jr. wins Myers Brothers award

LAS VEGAS — Dale Earnhardt Jr. has won NASCAR's prestigious Myers Brothers Award given to a person who makes significant contributions to the sport.

The award was named after short-track drivers Billy and Bobby Myers and has been presented annually since 1958. It is presented by the National Motorsports Press Association.

Earnhardt this year won the Nationwide Series championship as a car owner with Chase Elliott. He also made the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship and won four races.

In other auto racing news:

■ Four-time Indianapolis 500 winner A.J. Foyt has been released from a Houston hospital more than three weeks after triple-bypass heart surgery.

Foyt is expected to make a full recovery.

## Woods stumbles to a 77 in his return

WINDERMERE, Fla. — Tiger Woods returned to golf Thursday and it was as if he never left — except that he looked healthy.

Woods flubbed four chips, had only four birdie chances inside 20 feet and stumbled to a 5-over 77 in the opening round of the Hero World Challenge. He was in last place among the 18 players.

It was his second return this year from an ailing back. He missed the cut at Congressional in his first start after back surgery. This time, Woods is coming back from injury and working with a new coach.

Woods' lone birdie came on No. 12 when he spun a wedge back to tap-in range.



LENNOX MCLendon, FILE/AP

In this Nov. 4, 1994, file photo, referee Joe Cortez, left, signals heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe the winner as Bowe celebrates his victory over Evander Holyfield at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. Riddick Bowe, who beat undisputed champion Evander Holyfield to win the heavyweight boxing title in 1992, will be inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame on June 14 at the Hall of Fame in upstate New York.





## NBA

## Roundup

## Curry, Warriors trounce Pelicans

The Associated Press

OAKLAND, California — Stephen Curry had 19 points and a season-high 11 assists, Klay Thompson scored 23 points, and the Golden State Warriors beat the New Orleans Pelicans 112-85 on Thursday night for their 11th consecutive win.

Harrison Barnes added 17 points and 10 rebounds while Draymond Green had 14 points and 14 rebounds for Golden State, which improved to an NBA-best 16-2.

The winning streak matches the longest in Warriors history. The 1971-72 team also won 11 straight.

Anthony Davis had his 12th double-double for New Orleans with 30 points and 15 rebounds.

## Trail Blazers 88, Pacers 82:

LaMarcus Aldridge had 18 points and 13 rebounds for this fourth straight double-double to help host Portland win its third straight and 12th in its last 13.

Damian Lillard led all scorers with 23 points for the Blazers.

Rodney Stuckey had 16 points for the Pacers, who have lost three straight to open a four-game road trip.

The Pacers tied the score at 64 early in the fourth quarter, but Portland built a 75-66 lead after Nicolas Batum's three-pointer and Lillard's jumper. Stuckey hit a jumper that pulled the Pacers within 83-80 with 53 second left, but they couldn't get any closer.

## Scoreboard

## Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	15	4	.789	—
Brooklyn	8	9	.471	6
Boston	5	11	.313	8½
New York	4	16	.200	11½
Philadelphia	1	17	.056	13½
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	12	5	.706	—
Atlanta	11	6	.647	1
Miami	9	9	.500	2½
Orlando	7	14	.333	7
Charlotte	4	15	.211	9
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	12	7	.632	—
Cleveland	10	7	.588	1
Milwaukee	10	10	.500	2½
Indiana	12	7	.668	5
Detroit	3	16	.158	9

## Western Conference

Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	15	3	.833	—
Houston	14	4	.778	1
Dallas	15	5	.750	1
San Antonio	13	5	.722	2
New Orleans	8	9	.471	6½
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	15	4	.789	—
Denver	9	9	.500	5½
Oklahoma City	5	13	.278	9½
Utah	5	14	.263	10
Minnesota	4	13	.235	10
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	16	2	.889	—
L.A. Clippers	13	5	.722	3
Phoenix	11	7	.610	5½
Sacramento	9	10	.476	7
L.A. Lakers	5	14	.263	11½

## Wednesday's games

Washington 111, L.A. Lakers 95
Chicago 102, Charlotte 95
Atlanta 112, Miami 102
Boston 109, Detroit 102, OT
Brooklyn 95, San Antonio 93, OT
Phoenix 105, Memphis 96
Dallas 107, Milwaukee 105
Philadelphia 85, Minnesota 77
Toronto 123, Utah 104
L.A. Clippers 114, Orlando 86

## Thursday's games

Cleveland 90, New York 87
Portland 88, Indiana 82

## Friday's games

Oklahoma City at Philadelphia
Orlando at Washington
New York at Charlotte
Cleveland at Toronto
Atlanta at Boston
Atlanta at Brooklyn
San Antonio at Memphis
Houston at Minnesota
Phoenix at Dallas
Miami at Milwaukee
Cleveland at Utah
Indiana at Sacramento
Phoenix at Detroit
Philadelphia at Golden State
Golden State at Chicago
San Antonio at Houston
Minnesota at San Antonio
Orlando at Sacramento
New Orleans at L.A. Clippers

Thursday  
Warriors 112, Pelicans 85

NEW ORLEANS — Babbitt 2-3 0-0 5, Davis 14-19 2-4 30, Asik 4-8 1-2 8, Jr.Holiday 5-15 2-2 12, Evans 4-15 2-3 11, Anderson 2-9 0-4, Salmon 2-4 0-0 5, Cunningham 1-6 0-2 2, Rivers 2-8 1-2 7, Fredette 0-2 0-0 0, Withey 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 37-89 8-13 85.

GOLDEN STATE — Barnes 7-12 3-4 17, Green 6-13 0-0 14, Bogut 4-9 0-0 8, Curry 8-17 0-9 19, Thompson 8-16 2-4 23, Igoudala 3-6 0-3 6, Barbosa 3-6 0-0 6, Speights 5-14 2-12, Livingston 2-6 0-0 4, Ezeli 0-0 1-4 1, Jr.Holiday 1-1 0-0 2. Totals 47-100 8-17 112.

New Orleans 28 12 26 19—85  
Golden State 22 31 27 32—112  
Three-Point Goals—New Orleans 3-5 (Salmons 1-2, Babbitt 1-2, Evans 1-3, Rivers 0-1, Jr.Holiday 0-2, Anderson 0-5, Golden State 10-22 (Thompson 5-8, Curry 3-6, Green 2-5, Barnes 0-1, Igoudala 0-1, Barbosa 0-1). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—New Orleans 37 (Asik, Davis 15), Golden State 62 (Green 14). Assists—New Orleans 23 (Jr.Holiday 8), Golden State 31 (Curry 11). Total Fouls—New Orleans 15, Golden State 40. A—19,596 (19,596).

## Trail Blazers 88, Pacers 82:

INDIANA — S.Hill 7-11 0-0 15, West 6-13 0-13, Hibbert 4-10 1-2 9, Stuckey 7-15 2-2 16, Copeland 2-9 0-0 5, Watson 2-12 0-4 4, M. Miller 0-1 0-0 0, Rucker 2-4 0-0 5, Scoll 4-8 2-2 10, Miles 2-8 0-0 5. Totals 36-81 5-82.

PORTLAND — Batum 5-13 2-2 13, Aldridge 7-21 2-18, Lopez 1-5 2-4 4, Lillard 15-31 1-1 23, Matthews 6-14 0-0 15, Blake 1-4 0-0 2, Kaman 2-6 2-6 6, Crabbe 2-3 2-2 6, Freeland 2-2 0-0 4. Totals 33-63 18-23 88.

Indiana 14 19 26 23—82  
Portland 16 22 24 26—88  
Three-Point Goals—Indiana 5-18 (West 1-1, S.Hill 1-2, Rucker 1-3, Copeland 1-5, Miles 1-5, Watson 0-1, Stuckey 0-1), Portland 4-21 (Aldridge 2-2, Batum 1-5, Lillard 1-5, Crabbe 0-1, Blake 0-1, Matthews 0-5). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Indiana 58 (Mehm 10), Portland 55 (Aldridge 13). Assists—Indiana 19 (Stuckey 5), Portland 20 (West 5). Total Fouls—Portland 26, Indiana 16. Technicals—Hibbert, West. A—19,191 (19,980).

## Cavaliers 90, Knicks 87

CLEVELAND — James 7-17 4-7 19, Love 4-11 2-11, Varejao 8-13 2-2 18, Aldridge 18-10 11-37, Marion 2-8 0-0 5, Thompson 0-2 2-2 2, Waiters 3-6 0-0 6, Miller 0-1 0-0 0, Price 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 37-81 21-36 90.

NEW YORK — Acy 6-8 3-4 15, Anthony 4-19 0-9, Stoudemire 8-13 2-2 18, Calderone 1-5 0-0 3, Shumpert 1-2 0-0 0, Hibbert 3-6 0-0 6, J. Smith 4-8 0-0 9, Hardaway Jr. 9-14 0-0 20, Prigioni 0-2 0-0 0, J. Smith 3-13 0-0 2, Love 2-6 0-0 0. Totals 37-88 5-6 87.

## Cleveland

25 25 18 22—90  
New York 24 29 20 14—87

Three-Point Goals—Cleveland 5-18 (Irving 3-6, Marion 1-3, James 1-6, Miller 0-1, Love 0-2), New York 8-26 (Hardaway Jr. 4-11, Smith 1-2, Larkins 1-2, Calderone 1-4, Anthony 1-5, Prigioni 0-2, Shumpert 0-2). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Cleveland 40 (Love 11), New York 55 (Anthony 10). Assists—Cleveland 19 (James 12), New York 26 (Shumpert, Anthony, Prigioni 3). Total Fouls—Cleveland 16, New York 25. A—15,812 (15,763).



KATHY WILLEMS/AP

New York Knicks forward Amar'e Stoudemire (1) dunks over Cleveland Cavaliers center Anderson Varejao (17) as Cavaliers forward Shawn Marion (31) looks on during the second half in New York on Thursday. The Cavaliers won 90-87.

Cavaliers hold off Knicks  
Irving's 37 points lead Cleveland to fifth straight win

By BRIAN MAHONEY

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Kyrie Irving looked poised to slam the ball down in frustration, angry his coach had stopped him when the Knicks couldn't.

Everything worked out during that timeout. Irving didn't want. David Blatt put the ball right back in his point guard's hands, and Irving delivered one last time.

Irving scored a season-high 37 points, including a layup with 10 seconds left, and the Cleveland Cavaliers beat New York 90-87 on Thursday night for their season-best fifth straight victory.

"I saw something different out there, but that's just part of the game," Irving said of his reaction to Blatt's timeout. "He called timeout, drew up a heck of a play, trusted me with the ball at the end of the game, and we're getting used to one another."

Irving carried the Cavs most of the game before LeBron James had five straight points late that helped Cleveland pull it out. James finished with 19 points and 12 assists, content to be a passer most of the night because of Irving's play. "Spectacular," James said. "Any time we needed

a bucket, he made it. Any time we needed some energy, he gave it."

Carmelo Anthony ended a 4-for-19 night by missing a three-pointer in the final seconds as the Knicks dropped their sixth straight and fell to 4-16. He scored nine points.

"For the most part I thought everybody played extremely well tonight," Anthony said. "I wish I played better. I know I could have played a little bit better. I just wasn't there for my team offensively tonight."

Tim Hardaway Jr. added 20 points and Amar'e Stoudemire had 18 points and nine rebounds for the Knicks, who were trying to surprise the Cavs for the second time this season.

But New York, which spoiled James' first game back in Cleveland with a 95-90 victory on Oct. 30, couldn't hold on after leading by seven in the final quarter.

Kevin Love had 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Cavs, who had averaged 109.8 points in the previous four victories but could never get their offense going in this one — except for Irving.

He finished 12 of 18 from the field and bettered the 29 points per game he was scoring at Madison Square Garden, which was his best at any arena.

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL



LENNY IGNEZLI/AP

San Diego State forward Skylar Spencer is fouled while going up for a basket in the second half of Thursday's game against crosstown rival San Diego.

## Polee, O'Brien lead No. 13 SDSU to win

By BERNIE WILSON  
The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The No. 13 San Diego State Aztecs offered no apologies for an ugly win, just a reasonable explanation.

Dwayne Polee II scored 14 points and JJ O'Brien had 13 for the Aztecs, who beat San Diego 57-48 Thursday night for their ninth straight victory in the city rivalry.

The Aztecs (6-1) had 15 turnovers, 10 in the first half, and missed 14 of 27 free-throw attempts. They made only six of 23 shots in the second half and shot just 37.3 percent overall.

Yet they had a decent cushion the whole game.

"I think that is a testament to our defense," Polee said. "Our whole philosophy is, next play. So even if our offense isn't rolling, we are still going to play as hard as we can on defense."

The Aztecs were playing their first game since a 61-59 loss to No. 3 Arizona in the championship game of the Maui Invitational on Nov. 26.

San Diego State was 1-for-9 from the line at one point.

SDSU led by 10 points less than five minutes in and kept a big enough lead to keep USD from having a shot at an upset like last year, when Duda Sanadze's three-pointer at the buzzer was off the mark, letting SDSU escape with a 65-64 victory.

"The good news is we guarded like crazy," coach Steve Fisher said. "We made it hard for them to get good shots."

Freshman guard Trey Kell had 10 points for SDSU.

Johnny Deed scored 16 for USD (4-4). Christopher Anderson, who came in averaging 10.3 points, was held scoreless. He was 0-for-9 from the field, including six attempts from three-point range.

"They did a great job harassing Chris," USD coach Bill Grier said. "Johnny didn't get any good looks. This is a credit to how they've recruited. It's a credit to their staff. They are an elite team defensively."

Grier said it was hard practicing for the Aztecs.

"You really can't prepare, until you see it in person, particularly for your young players, and their length and the way they defend," he said. "I can't emulate it in practice for our guys. We just don't have that."

# LSU upsets No. 16 West Virginia

## Defensive breakdown costs Mountaineers

By JIM LAISE  
The Associated Press

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — With the game on the line, West Virginia had a huge breakdown on defense.

Josh Gray made a go-ahead layup with 74 seconds left and reserve guard Tim Quarterman scored 21 points to help LSU upset the 16th-ranked Mountaineers 74-73 on Thursday night.

"We practice that every day. That's a flat screen. The guard has always taken right and the big takes left," West Virginia coach Bob Huggins said. "The guard jumped to the left. Even with that, I don't get how you shoot a layup from the top of the key and nobody helps."

Jarell Martin had 18 points and 14 rebounds for the Tigers (6-2), who overcame a 14-point deficit in the second half. Keith Hornsby scored 15.

West Virginia (7-1) was off to its best start since opening 11-0 during the 2009-10 Final Four season.

The Mountaineers were led by Juwan Staten's 17 points. Dexter Miles added 13 and Tarik Phillip had 12.

West Virginia led 43-38 at halftime and extended its lead to 14 points in the second half before LSU went on a 15-3 run to pull within three.

Hornsby hit a three-pointer and two free throws to tie the score at 58.

West Virginia led 66-60 with 5:06 to go. Each team had held a one-point lead until Gray hit the decisive shot.

"I feel like I can get in the lane at will and that's what I did," he said. "The lane opened up and I had a wide-open layup."

West Virginia had one more chance, but Staten missed a jumper with 3 seconds remaining.

LSU's previous victory against a ranked opponent on the road also came in Morgantown. The Tigers edged the 13th-ranked Mountaineers 71-68 in overtime on Nov. 26, 2005.



RAYMOND THOMPSON/AP

LSU guard Keith Hornsby shoots over West Virginia forward Jonathan Holton (1) during Thursday's game in Morgantown, W.Va.

## No. 20 Cyclones top No. 18 Razorbacks

By LUKE MEREDITH  
The Associated Press

AMES, Iowa — Iowa State transfer Bryce Dejean-Jones appears poised to become more than just Georges Niang's sidekick this season.

Dejean-Jones had 27 points, Niang added 26 with eight assists and 20th-ranked Iowa State never trailed in rolling past No. 18 Arkansas 95-77 on Thursday night.

Dustin Hogue scored 14 for the Cyclones (5-1), who led by as many as 23 points in extending their non-conference home winning streak to 24 games.

Iowa State's fast-break offense overwhelmed the Razorbacks (6-1) from the opening tip. The Cyclones took their first double-digit lead less than six minutes in and led 52-32 at the break.

Dejean-Jones led the way, going 8-for-8 from the floor and 4-for-4 from three-point range.

"That's a pretty good line. I can't believe he missed a free throw. But it was everything," Iowa State coach Fred Hoiberg said. "He had to play good defense. He was out there the whole second half without a rest... It was a relief to see him get it going from the three-point line."



CHARLIE NEIBERGALL/AP

Iowa State guard Naz Long celebrates as he walks off the court after beating Arkansas on Thursday in Ames, Iowa.

Bobby Portis scored 19 to lead the Razorbacks, who haven't won a road game as a ranked team since 1999.

This was billed as potentially one of the highest-scoring games of the season. Arkansas entered ranked fourth nationally at 90 points per game, and Iowa State was averaging 83.4 points through five games.

The Razorbacks knew they were in trouble once they found themselves down 15 after 12 minutes — even though they were shooting 50 percent from the field.

Iowa State pushed the tempo better than it had all season, and the Arkansas defense appeared powerless to stop the Cyclones.

Iowa State went on a 13-0 run midway through the first half to go up 39-20, and Niang's layup made it 48-26 with 2:26 left.

The Cyclones hit 18 of their first 28 shots — with assists on 13 of their made baskets — and nailed seven three-pointers in the first 20 minutes.

"(Hoiberg) was preaching before the game that we really need to get out and step on these guys from the beginning," Niang said.

Portis hit a few shots early to keep Arkansas briefly within striking distance, and its press defense caused Iowa State some issues in the second half. But it was clear from the early stages that the Razorbacks were headed to their first loss of the season.

Alandise Harris had 15 points for Arkansas, which never got within single digits after halftime.

"We were a half-step slow. I thought they came out and they attacked us and they put us on our heels," Arkansas coach Mike Anderson said. "We got stagnant offensively."

NFL

## Scoreboard

## American Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	Pf	PA
New England	9	3	0	.750	378	253
Miami	7	5	0	.583	301	232
Buffalo	7	5	0	.583	264	217
N.Y. Jets	2	10	0	.167	190	319
<b>South</b>						
Indianapolis	8	4	0	.667	382	283
Houston	6	6	0	.500	287	247
Tennessee	2	10	0	.167	213	338
Jacksonville	2	10	0	.167	186	329
<b>North</b>						
Cincinnati	8	4	0	.708	260	247
Baltimore	7	5	0	.583	328	242
Pittsburgh	7	5	0	.583	320	298
Cleveland	7	5	0	.583	252	245
<b>West</b>						
Denver	9	3	0	.750	361	276
San Diego	8	4	0	.667	279	249
Kansas City	7	5	0	.583	277	224
Oakland	1	11	0	.083	176	337

## National Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	Pf	PA
Philadelphia	9	3	0	.750	375	285
Dallas	9	4	0	.692	343	301
N.Y. Giants	3	9	0	.250	257	319
Washington	3	9	0	.250	244	322
<b>South</b>						
Atlanta	5	7	0	.417	291	299
New Orleans	5	7	0	.417	323	318
Carolina	3	8	1	.292	228	331
Tampa Bay	2	10	0	.167	220	314
<b>North</b>						
Green Bay	9	3	0	.750	380	267
Detroit	8	4	0	.667	231	207
Minnesota	5	7	0	.417	233	257
Chicago	5	8	0	.385	281	378
<b>West</b>						
Arizona	9	3	0	.750	258	224
Seattle	8	4	0	.667	298	221
San Francisco	7	5	0	.583	231	244
St. Louis	5	7	0	.417	261	285

## Thursday's game

## Dallas at Chicago 28

## Sunday's games

## Carolina at New Orleans

## N.Y. Jets at Minnesota

## Pittsburgh at Cincinnati

## San Diego at Washington

## Baltimore at Miami

## Indianapolis at Cleveland

## Tampa Bay at Detroit

## Houston at Jacksonville

## Kansas City at Arizona

## San Francisco at Oakland

## Seattle at Philadelphia

## New England at San Diego

## New York Giants at New York Jets

## Atlanta at Green Bay

## Thursday, Dec. 11

## Arizona at St. Louis

## Sunday, Dec. 14

## Oakland at Kansas City

## Pittsburgh at Atlanta

## Washington at N.Y. Giants

## Miami at New England

## Houston at Indianapolis

## Jacksonville at Baltimore

## Green Bay at Buffalo

## Tampa Bay at Carolina

## Cincinnati at Cleveland

## Denver at San Diego

## N.Y. Jets at Tennessee

## San Francisco at Detroit

## Minnesota at Seattle

## Dallas at Philadelphia

## Monday, Dec. 15

## New Orleans at Chicago

## Thursday

## Cowboys at Bears 28

Dallas	0	14	21	6 - 41
Chicago	7	0	7	0 - 21

## Second Quarter

**Dal**—Murray 1 run (Bailey kick), 10:50.

**Chi**—Bennett 12 pass from Cutler (Feely kick), 6:13.

**Dal**—Beasley 13 pass from Romo (Bailey kick), 3:08.

## Third Quarter

**Dal**—Beasley 24 pass from Romo (Bailey kick), 12:32.

**Dal**—Espar 6 pass from Romo (Bailey kick), 8:02.

**Dal**—Randall 17 run (Bailey kick), 2:09.

## Fourth Quarter

**Chi**—Jeffery 27 pass from Cutler (kick blocked), 12:32.

**Dal**—FG Bailey 13, 12:35.

**Chi**—Ford 1 run (Forke run), 7:17.

**Chi**—Cutler 10 run (Feely kick), 6:09.

**Dal**—FG Bailey 27, 3:41.

**A**—55.555.

First downs 21 21

Total Net Yards 397 376

Rushes-yards 35-194 15-35

Passing 263 241

Punt Returns 1-1 0-0

Kickoff Returns 2-23 1-0

Interceptions Ret. 1-0 4-35

Comp.-Att 21-29 12-20

Sacked-Yards Lost 1-2 32-46

Punts 2-375 4-335

Fumbles-Lost 0-0 1-1

Penalties-Yards 8-97 9-54

Time of Possession 28:28 27:32

## INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**Rushing**—Dallas, Murray 32-176, Randall 1-7, Romo 2-2; Chicago, Forte 13-26, Cutler 2-9.

**Passing**—Dallas, Romo 21-26-0-205.

**Chicago**, Cutler 32-46-1-341.

**Kicking**—Dallas, Bailey 4-9, Bryant 4-9, Britt 4-8; Beasley 3-42, Witten 2-26, Espar 1-6; Chicago, Bennett 12-84, Forte 8-7, Jeffery 6-26; Marshall 3-61, Wilson 2-19, Morgan 1-8.

**MISSED FIELD GOALS**—None.

## Seahawks' defense to be tested

By CURTIS CRABTREE

The Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — After losing Brandon Mebane for the year and allowing 190 yards rushing to the Kansas City Chiefs three weeks ago, the Seattle Seahawks defense looked like it may be unable to recapture its dominant form from last season.

Consecutive 19-3 victories over the Arizona Cardinals and San Francisco 49ers have quieted those concerns as the Seahawks have allowed just one touchdown in their last 10 quarters of play.

"After the Kansas City game, it was a mess," head coach Pete Carroll said. "We jumped right back to business and really recaptured the chance of having a great finish to the season. It was a hard way to learn but it was worth it. That's obviously the most important thing that's shown up."

Seattle's held Arizona to just 204 yards of offense and the 49ers to just 164 total yards. The return of safety Kam Chancellor and linebacker Bobby Wagner to the lineup has solidified the unit with just 64 rushing yards allowed in each of the last two games.

"We've got talent across the board," Wagner said. "Teams try to look for matchup problems against us and they aren't going to find many, if any."

The defensive resurgence will be tested this week against the fast-paced offensive attack of the Philadelphia Eagles. Philadelphia enters the game ranked fourth in total offense and sixth in rushing.



TONY AVELAR/AP

San Francisco running back Frank Gore, center, is wrapped up by Seattle free safety Earl Thomas (29) and middle linebacker Bobby Wagner (54) during the first quarter on Thanksgiving night in Santa Clara, Calif. The Seattle defense has giving up just one touchdown in the last 10 quarters of play.

LeSean McCoy and Darren Sproles will present a challenge for Seattle's run defense.

"You're going to see some shaking and baking in this game from those guys. They got it," Carroll said.

McCoy rushed for 159 yards and a touchdown last week against the Dallas Cowboys.

"Guys have got to be disciplined," linebacker K.J. Wright said. "We've all got to be out there together and just make sure that we can't let this guy get out because it will be a long day if he has a big game."

"This guy is really looking to get outside on the perimeter, getting one-on-ones with defensive

ends and linebackers in the open field and get his yardage like that."

The Seahawks hope to continue their strong play against the run and keep McCoy and Sproles in check. If they can accomplish that, it will put more pressure on Mark Sanchez to make plays against Seattle's imposing secondary.

## Focus: Dallas rebounds from blowout loss on Thanksgiving

## FROM BACK PAGE

"Other than the fact we still have all our goals in front of us," Romo said when asked about clearing the eight-win mark. "I think that's more for you guys to do your 8-8 stuff."

Led by Romo and Murray, Dallas rebounded from a blowout loss to the Eagles on Thanksgiving and pulled within a half-game of them with another showdown in Philadelphia next week.

The Cowboys took a 14-7 halftime lead and scored 21 consecutive points in the third quarter before the Bears (5-8) rallied in the fourth.

With the win, the Cowboys improved to a league-best 6-0 on the road, where they have won seven straight since a blowout loss at Soldier Field on a bone-chilling night last December.

Here are some things we learned in this game:

**Tuning up:** Romo, who has been bothered by a bad back, rebounded from a rough game against Philadelphia, completing 21 of 26 passes for 205 yards. He was patient, consistently checked down and posted a 138 rating for the game.

Having the league's leading rusher doesn't hurt him.

Murray carried 32 times. He also had 49 yards receiving on nine catches.

"Like a lot of great backs through the years in this league, oftentimes these guys get better the more touches they get," coach Jason Garrett said. "I think he's demonstrating that. He just has such a good feel for running the football."



CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

**Dallas defensive tackle Josh Brent played for the first time this season after serving a 10-game suspension following his intoxication manslaughter conviction.**

**Running nowhere:** The Bears vowed to be more balanced on offense after running eight times for 13 yards a week earlier in a loss at Detroit.

They made more of an effort this time but didn't get anywhere, running 15 times for 35 yards.

Matt Forte had 13 carries for 26 yards against tying a career low with five rushes against

the Lions. The rest came from Jay Cutler, who ran two times for 9 yards.

**Marshall goes down:** Limited by ankle problems earlier in the year, Marshall can now add a rib injury to the list.

He was hurt taking a knee to the right side from the Cowboys' Barry Church following a reception in the second quarter. That happened moments after he made a spectacular 42-yard catch, juggling the ball with his right hand, to help set up a touchdown.

TV cameras showed him leaving Soldier Field in an ambulance, and Marshall later posted on Twitter, "Thanks for the Prayers... I'm Good. #MindOverMatter."

**Brent's back:** Cowboys defensive tackle Josh Brent played for the first time this season after serving a 10-game suspension and being held out for two more following his intoxication manslaughter conviction.

He hadn't played since Dec. 2, 2012, six days before the drunken-driving crash that killed teammate Jerry Brown.

"I've been blessed to be put back in this position and I'm gonna take advantage of it," Brent said.

**Job security:** Bears coach Marc Tremestrian insisted he's not worrying about his future. He's 13-16 in nearly two years and the Bears have regressed since they fired Lovie Smith following a 10-win season.

"The only thing I'm concerned about is the health of my football team right now and some of the players on it and bringing them in (Friday) and coaching them up to do a better job than they've done," Tremestrian said. "That's exactly my only focus and will be my only focus."



# COLLEGE FOOTBALL



MARK HOFFMAN, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL/MCT

Wisconsin linebacker Marcus Trotter (59) runs with an interception during the second quarter of their game against Rutgers on Nov. 1 in Piscataway, N.J. Trotter is one of the leaders of the Wisconsin defense charged with stopping Ohio State's new starting quarterback Cardale Jones.

## Badgers' defense wary of Ohio State QB Jones

By GENARO C. ARMAS  
The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin defensive coordinator Dave Aranda drew on a baseball analogy to describe Ohio State's best offense in the Big Ten.

It didn't matter that injuries had the sixth-ranked Buckeyes relying on third-stringer Cardale Jones at quarterback heading into Saturday's Big Ten championship game in Indianapolis.

"Every play with their skill is a home-run shot, so if you're not perfect with everything, then it's a big chance of a big play," Aranda said. "This year, toward the end of the season, they've shown some big-play capability."

They're going with the football equivalent of a promising but inexperienced hurler out of the bullpen to finish their season.

It doesn't get any tougher than having to face the league-best defense of Wisconsin (10-2, No. 13 CFP), which allows 260.3 yards per game.

Jones is playing in relief of Heisman Trophy candidate J.T. Barrett, who broke his ankle in last week's win over Michigan. Jones had the edge as the backup going into fall camp.

Barrett, a redshirt freshman, had performed well while replacing Braxton Miller, the three-year starter who hurt his right



**Big Ten Championship  
Wisconsin vs. Ohio State**  
AFN-Atlantic  
2 a.m. Sunday CET

shoulder two weeks before the season opener.

So Jones will make his first career start in the biggest game of the season for Ohio State (11-1, No. 5 CFP).

"Obviously, a really good environment against a very tough defense," Buckeyes coach Urban Meyer said. "But it's not like he's not taking snaps with the one offense or understands the concepts. So he has a very good understanding."

Barrett was hurt on a carry on the first play of the fourth quarter against Michigan. The Buckeyes were held to 416 yards in total offense in the game, their lowest total since being limited to 293 at Penn State on Oct. 25.

For his career, Jones is 10-for-19 passing for 121 yards and two touchdowns. The move to Jones might put Wisconsin at a disadvantage because there's not much

film of him out there — especially in meaningful situations.

"I guess we won't really know until Saturday," Badgers linebacker Marcus Trotter said when asked how different Ohio State's offense might look with Jones instead of Barrett.

"But at the same time, their offense is very similar to every other offense in that they're going to stick to their bread and butter," Trotter added. "They might have a couple tricks up their sleeves just because of the new quarterback."

Aranda was preparing for perhaps more misdirection than what Ohio State has so far shown. Maybe more two tight-end sets to provide maximum protection for Jones, which would put the emphasis on taking 1-on-1 shots down the field.

And that quarterback run isn't going away, though it might take on a different look with the 6-foot-5, 250-pound Jones carrying the ball instead of the 6-1, 222-pound Barrett.

"The first thing that strikes you is his size," Aranda said about Jones. "One of their top plays is the quarterback sweep, and he's awfully good at it. ... He lowers his shoulder, runs over guys, runs around guys."

AP Sports Writer Rusty Miller in Columbus, Ohio, contributed to this story.

## One Big Ten team may be out of luck

By DAVID MERCER  
The Associated Press

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — The Big Ten has informed its schools that one offits bowl-eligible teams could be left out of the postseason.

Illinois sports information director Kent Brown says the school received a memo from the league office notifying it of the potential bowl shortage. The league has 10 eligible teams.

"Worst-case scenario, there will be nine spots for 10 teams. It could affect us," Kent Brown said Thursday.

ESPN first reported an email was sent from a Big Ten official to conference members on Wednesday.

Illinois (6-6, 3-5 Big Ten), which became bowl eligible Saturday by beating Northwestern, is one of the teams most likely to get left out. Penn State is also 6-6 and bowl eligible for the first time in three years after NCAA sanctions for the Jerry Sandusky child-sex abuse scandal. Conference newcomers Rutgers and Maryland each finished 7-5.

Penn State is unlikely to get snubbed. The Nittany Lions have a huge fanbase that is expected to gobble up tickets to the team's first bowl appearance since after the ill-fated 2011 season. The Pin-stripe Bowl in Yankee Stadium is hoping to land Penn State.

"We got to sit back. We're eligible. If it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out," Illinois quarterback Reilly O'Toole told WSJK radio station in Champaign. "We did our job."

Big Ten officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The problem for the Big Ten is tied to its agreements with the

Orange and Citrus bowls.

Michigan State, as the eighth-ranked team in the latest College Football Playoff rankings, is in position to go to the Orange Bowl. The South Florida game has a deal to take the highest ranked team that does not win a conference championship from among the Big Ten, Southeastern Conference or Notre Dame to face a team from the Atlantic Coast Conference.

If the Spartans or another Big Ten team go to the Orange Bowl, the Big Ten does not get a spot in the Citrus Bowl in Orlando.

The trickle down from losing that spot leaves the Big Ten with agreements for seven bowl spots. Unless the Big Ten gets three teams in the six New Year's Day games that are part of the College Football Playoff, the conference will be one short.

There also will be no at-large spots available in other bowls. There are currently 80 bowl eligible teams to fill 76 spots. All of those spots are accounted for by other conferences with either primary or secondary agreements.

Getting three teams into those six New Year's Day games is possible for the Big Ten. If Wisconsin beats Ohio State in the Big Ten championship game, that would guarantee the Badgers a spot, and could leave Ohio State, fifth in the latest rankings, and Michigan State with good enough rankings to earn their way into the New Year's Six, too.

The Big Ten has agreements with 12 bowls in all, but some spots are shared with other conferences to avoid sending teams to the same games in a short period of time.

AP College Football Writer Ralph D. Russo in New York contributed.



GENE J. PUSKAS/AP

Penn State wide receiver Chris Godwin, right, and the Nittany Lions are eligible for a bowl for the first time since 2011, but one of the 10 teams in the league eligible for a bowl may sit home.

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL



TIM SHARP/AP

Baylor quarterback Bryce Petty drops back to pass behind offensive linemen Kyle Fuller (55). Petty was a full participant in practice by the end of the week after getting knocked out of a 48-46 win over Texas Tech last Saturday with a concussion. His status for Saturday's game is still undetermined.

# Much at stake for Bears

## Playoff on the line for defending Big 12 champs vs. K-State

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS  
The Associated Press

WACO, Texas — Fifth-ranked Baylor is in the same position as a year ago, with its home finale being a de facto Big 12 championship game.

The defending champion Bears have even more at stake this time.

Baylor (10-1, 7-1 Big 12, No. 6 CFP) can make a strong case for inclusion in the new four-team national playoff with a win Saturday night over ninth-ranked Kansas State (9-2, 7-1, No. 9 CFP), which is also trying to win another Big 12 title.

"Everything is motivating at this point. Our team put itself in a position to win another Big 12 championship. That is big in itself," said Bears receiver Corey Coleman, who has touchdown catches in a nation-best eight consecutive games. "Then you add in the situation with the playoffs, and it makes this week pretty big. ... There's a lot on the line, and it's up to us not to let that be bigger than the game itself."

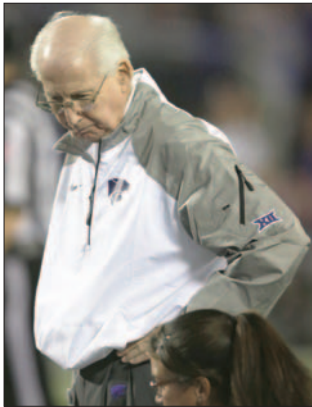
Kansas State is going for its second Big 12 title in three seasons, but had to share the 2012 championship because of a miserable night its last visit to Waco two years ago. The Wildcats were 10-0 and ranked No. 1 in the BCS standings before a 52-24 loss.

The Bears and Wildcats will know by kickoff if they are playing to share or win the conference title outright. Fourth-ranked TCU (10-1, 7-4, No. 3 CFP) can claim its share with a win earlier Saturday against last-place Iowa State (2-9, 0-8).

On a bone-chilling first Saturday in December last year, Baylor claimed its first Big 12 title outright with a 30-7 win over Texas, after Oklahoma State lost at home to Oklahoma earlier in the day.

"There's a lot of parallels and a lot of differences," coach Art Briles said. "We're a different football team of course, and Kansas State is different than Texas was, but the scenario is certainly the same."

Coach Bill Snyder's team has mostly been in the



ORLIN WAGNER/AP

Bill Snyder's Kansas State Wildcats head to Waco, Texas, in search of their second Big 12 title in three seasons. Kansas State shared the 2012 title with Oklahoma.

Big 12 background this year because of the ongoing national debate about private schools TCU and Baylor, even with K-State having the same chance to win a Big 12 title.

"That is not something I think about. Certainly our players do and that is certainly viable. I don't address it that way," Snyder said. "I am the same old, same old, one day at a time. ... Other than the fact that we are capable of anything, I do not place any limitations on our football team today and certainly did not however many months ago when we got started."

Saturday's game will be the second matchup of Top 10 teams in Waco this season, after the only previous one came in 1956:

## Things to watch: Playoff scenarios

# Running down the possibilities

BY RALPH D. RUSSO  
The Associated Press

The 12-member College Football Playoff selection committee will gather Saturday in Texas to watch the final weekend of the season play out and then rank the top 25 teams in the country. The top four will compete for the national championship in the sport's first ever playoff.

How difficult the committee's job will be depends on the outcome of about a half dozen games to be played Friday and Saturday.

"At that point, we will have had a season-long body of work to evaluate, in addition to knowing who the conference champions are," committee chairman Jeff Long said.

The top four heading into the weekend are in order: Alabama, Oregon, TCU and Florida State. If they all take care of business, there is a good chance that will be the top four on Sunday, too. Probably. Maybe?

But what happens if things don't go as expected? Let's dive into the possibilities.

### What happens if ...

**Missouri beats Alabama?** The unthinkable — at least for many down South. There is a very real possibility the Southeastern Conference would be left out of the playoff. Missouri is ranked 16th in the latest playoff rankings. That's a long way to go to get in the four-team field. The committee clearly is not loving Missouri's ugly losses (at home against Indiana and 34-0 to Georgia), so it's doubtful it will forgive Alabama for losing to the Tigers and allow the Crimson Tide to back into the field. If the Tigers pull an upset, the SEC is going to need a lot of help. The Crimson Tide are favored by 14½.

**Arizona beats Oregon?** The Wildcats are seventh in the rankings, heading into a rematch with Oregon on Friday. Two wins away from home against the Ducks would be like holding a pair of aces: tough to beat. It could come down to a resumé contest between Baylor and/or Ohio State and Arizona. Don't bet against the Wildcats making the big jump. The Pac-12 and commissioner Larry Scott are aware of the championship as a playoff play-in game. They might be right. Despite losing the first game, Oregon is favored by 14½.

**Georgia Tech beats Florida State?** Considering the fourth-place and unbeaten Seminoles have been dropping when they win, there's no doubt they'd be done with a loss. Georgia Tech is 11th and beating Florida State would mean finishing the season with three straight wins against ranked teams. The Yellow Jackets would probably need Baylor (vs. Kansas State) and Ohio State (vs. Wisconsin) to lose to reach the top four, but considering who



VASHA HUNT, AL.COM/AP

Alabama head coach Nick Saban shouts orders during an Alabama football practice on Tuesday in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

those teams are playing, that doesn't seem like such a stretch. Florida State is favored by 4.

**TCU struggles to beat Iowa State?** The Horned Frogs got a pass for squeaking by at Kansas last month. That can't happen again against a 30-point underdog at home. If it does, it would open the door for either Baylor or Ohio State to replace the Frogs in the top four. With the Bears and Buckeyes in position to add marquee wins to their résumés, the third-ranked Horned Frogs better exert some serious game control against the Cyclones.

**Three of the top four teams lose?** Assuming it won't be TCU, the Big 12 would be looking good to get two teams in the field. TCU, Baylor, Ohio State and Arizona sounds about right in this scenario. If Baylor were to lose to K-State, the ninth-ranked Wildcats could become a viable option, though that scenario probably allows Georgia Tech to squeeze through.

**Alabama, Ohio State and Baylor lose?** This is how Missouri could get in. Assuming Arizona and Georgia Tech also lose, the final spot with Florida State, TCU and Oregon comes down to Missouri, Kansas State and Wisconsin. Michigan State (eighth) and Mississippi State (10th) would likely come back into the conversation, but neither would have the conference championship that those other three would have on their résumés. And what team would have a better win than Missouri if it takes down the committee's No. 1 team on a neutral field?

**The top six teams all lose?** Long and his crew might have to pull an all-nighter.

The questions with this doomsday scenario are: Could it allow Alabama to back in? Would Mississippi State and/or Michigan State get in? And how bad will the TV ratings be for a final four of Arizona, Georgia Tech, Kansas State and Wisconsin or Missouri?

## SPORTS



**Mountaineers fall**  
No. 16 West Virginia upset  
by LSU | College basketball, Page 28



**NFL**

Chicago tight end Martellus Bennett, center, is tackled by Dallas cornerback Orlando Scandrick, left, and linebacker Rolando McClain during the first half of Thursday's game in Chicago.

NAM Y. HUN/AP



Dallas QB  
Tony Romo

CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

# Focus returns

## Cowboys whip Bears, look to Eagles

By ANDREW SELIGMAN  
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Tony Romo didn't need much time to turn his attention toward next week's showdown. He was planning to do that on the flight home.

"I'll probably start on Philly tonight on the way back when we're on the plane," Romo said after the Dallas Cowboys beat the Chicago Bears 41-28 on Thursday night.

DeMarco Murray ran for a season-high 179 yards and a touchdown and Romo threw for three scores to lead Dallas past the Bears.

The Cowboys (9-4) made it look easy for most of

### Inside:

■ Test awaits resurgent Seattle defense, Page 29

the night against a struggling team that lost star receiver Brandon Marshall to a rib injury. Dallas clinched its first winning season since 2009 and guaranteed it will

finish above .500 after three straight 8-8 finishes. But the Cowboys are looking for more, with an NFC East title and first playoff appearance in five years in sight.

SEE FOCUS ON PAGE 29

Irving's hot hand helps Cavs hold off Knicks

NBA, Page 27

Predators beat Blues, ruin Brodeur's return

NHL, Page 26